

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

NOVEMBER, 1934

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From a painting by Maurice Bower

Courtesy of St. Nicholas Magazine

Thanksgiving in the Olden Time

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Comparisons of Teaching in Nursery School, Kindergarten and First Grade

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TIME has been, but is long since past, when one phase of a child's education can be considered apart from any other. More and more is the effort apparent to bring each phase of that education into consistent relationship with every other. To that end there seems to be an increasing interest on the part of kindergarten teachers in knowing what sort of experiences the child has had before he comes into the kindergarten and to what sort of experiences he will go when he leaves. Similarly the first grade and the nursery school teachers question about the experiences preceding and following the particular bit for which they are directly responsible. Parents, too, question more and more frequently as to the similarities and differences in their child's school experiences from year to year and often ask why these exist.

Some differences doubtless exist because of the changes due to a child's maturation and the consequent variations in his needs from year to year. Doubtless other differences exist because of a conservative holding

to traditional lines of procedure when a more thoughtful analysis of possible other procedures might suggest desirable changes. It is the purpose of this paper and of the one that follows to mention rather than to evaluate the differences or similarities to be found among these three divisions of a child's school experiences, pointing out briefly certain of those which were brought to attention through a recent study of current practice.¹

In order to carry on this study an instrument² was devised whereby teachers on each of these three levels could indicate by their checkings against given criteria the approximate frequency with which certain teaching acts were performed and the relative importance which they as teachers attached to these acts for the age level they represented. It seems valid to assume that the picture of current practice shown by the checkings upon which this report is based is a fair representation of practice in the country at large since the checkings were secured from different types of schools

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first article of a series on this subject by Grace Langdon. The second article will consider comparisons among the three levels as to current practice in music, English, number play, and learning to live with other people

¹Grace Langdon, *Similarities and Differences in Teaching in Nursery School, Kindergarten and First Grade*. New York: John Day Company, 1934.

²*Ibid.* Appendix D. This instrument was a check list of teaching acts.

in cities of different population groups in every state of the United States.

As one compares the practice on the three levels studied and considers similarities and differences found in that practice, one constantly asks, Why are there these similarities or differences? Can they all be attributed to the different needs of the children at different stages of development? What, if any, are the implications for teachers, for parents, or for those concerned with teacher training? Obviously, no one final authoritative answer can be given to such questions. Only as the practice found is thoughtfully considered and analyzed can an answer even be ventured, and even then the answers doubtless will differ as the experience and educational philosophy of the persons answering differs. While no final answer can be given, as the findings are presented, questions provocative of discussion will be suggested, and in the third and final paper of the series there will be pointed out what to the writer seems to be a challenge to those responsible for guiding the preparation of teachers on these three levels.

The check list which was used as the basis for the study included teaching acts having to do with such phases of a child's educational experience as follows: eating, sleeping, toileting, health and hygiene, music, English, number, play and learning to live with other people. It is under these headings that the comparisons reported in this paper will be pointed out.

EATING

Examination of the data shows that but slightly more attention is given to these teaching acts listed as "helping children to form good eating habits" in the nursery school than in the kindergarten and first grade. This will doubtless occasion some surprise on the part of those who think of eating as one of the major activities in the nursery school. Further examination of the data shows, as might be expected, that the nursery school gives more attention than either kindergarten or first grade to helping

children achieve independence in the skills connected with eating, while in the kindergarten and first grade more emphasis is placed on the observance of socially acceptable table manners than in the nursery school.

Nursery school, kindergarten, and first grade teachers seem to agree in considering of greatest relative importance those acts having to do with cleanliness in eating, whereas the widest differences in rating seem to be on those acts having to do with the general management of the children during the eating period, this difference seeming to lie in the techniques used to achieve the desired end. Consistently the nursery school teachers question verbalization concerning eating habits and the values of certain foods, while both kindergarten and first grade teachers rate such verbalization as having some value. This raises a question as to whether or not such verbalization is desirable even at those levels or whether even with children of kindergarten and first grade age it might be better to leave such considerations for a later stage of development when the scientific sanctions would be better understood.

Judging from the checkings also it seems to be a common practice to ask children to report on the foods eaten at home, giving approval to those who report having eaten those foods generally accepted as good for children. One questions whether there may not be a danger here of setting up the habit of giving the expected or desired answer rather than the facts of the case. Is there a danger, too, of building up of a feeling of inadequacy by making the child feel responsible for conditions over which he has no control? Many persons would question also the technique of personifying foods as a means of interesting children in eating those that are good for them, though this technique received checkings indicating moderate approval in both kindergarten and first grade and less in nursery school. Relatively little attention seems to be given to the discussion of good table manners as such on any of the three levels, the learning of these seeming to be largely incidental.

SLEEPING

As would probably be expected by any one familiar with general practice the checkings of the acts of this group indicate that nursery school teachers perform more frequently than kindergarten or first grade teachers those acts having to do with helping children to learn to sleep and rest. Indeed approximately three fourths of the acts of this group are checked by the latter as being performed infrequently or not at all. One might question whether such acts might not be equally important for the well-being of children of kindergarten and first grade age and whether in the interests of that well-being the set up should not provide for their performance. However, it would seem from the checkings that kindergarten and first grade teachers themselves consider these acts as of relatively little importance though by nursery school teachers they are considered highly important. Interestingly enough, though the list of acts includes those having to do with the general management of the sleep and rest time and with helping children to learn how to relax, the act agreed upon by the nursery school, kindergarten, and first grade teachers as being of the most importance is, "ventilating and arranging the room for rest." The greatest difference found among the three levels has to do with those acts involving techniques used for getting a child to sleep. One wonders whether this is because certain techniques are better suited to one level than to another, and if so, what principles guide the selection of those techniques.

Throughout the study of this section a question comes to mind which cannot be answered by the data; that is, can the facts as shown by the data be taken as indicative that there is in current practice in the country at large markedly less recognition of the importance of the formation of habits of rest and sleep in the first grade and kindergarten than in the nursery school? Is this because there is such a difference in the needs of these children? Or are there difficulties in the way of providing for the continuance of those habits begun in the nursery

school? If so, what are these difficulties? Should they be removed? If so, how?

TOILETING

The acts in this group have to do with the habits of elimination, with washing and dressing and undressing. The checkings for this section indicate that nursery school teachers perform more of these acts than either kindergarten or first grade teachers and that they likewise consider them of more importance. Among the nursery school group the main emphasis seems to be given to the learning of skills, these considered by the nursery school teachers as the most important of the acts included in this group. One questions whether less attention might profitably be given to these skills until children have acquired more motor control than is the case at the nursery school level? Or, if left until such a time, is there a danger that these skills will not be learned?

The fact that first grade teachers, according to the checkings, tend to place their greatest emphasis on the acts having to do with personal appearance raises the question as to whether it is desirable for children to become conscious so early of their personal appearance or whether this is the time to develop such consciousness.

The widest variations in checking on judgment of importance lies in that group of acts which might be questioned from a mental hygiene viewpoint. This group includes such acts as: "Have tooth brush drills"; "Give disapproval to child who reports he did not brush his teeth"; "Talk with children in the group about the desirability of keeping themselves looking well"; "Give stars, ribbons, and symbols, to children who are neat and clean in personal appearance"; "Keep honor roll of children who report they brush their teeth at home." While the checking of these acts does not indicate a high frequency of performance yet the checkings do show that they *are* performed on all three levels though with wide variations of frequency and are considered of some, though widely differing degrees of importance on the three levels.

One wonders why the acts having to do with the children's *attitudes* towards toileting and the elimination processes receive such relatively little attention. Is it because it is the general opinion that such attention is better suited to a later age level or is it because time is so taken with other matters that these are pushed into the background? Has there been insufficient recognition of the fundamental importance of these attitudes? Finally, one wishes there might be an answer based on supportable fact as to what differentiation really is desirable from a developmental viewpoint in the emphasis on these learnings from age level to age level.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Of the acts of this group those performed most frequently and rated as most important by the groups checking have to do with the school's protection of the health of the children. In fact, the ratings indicate that teachers on all three levels are highly conscious of the importance of such protection. In this protection there seems to be more emphasis by the nursery school teachers on exclusion for colds and protection from exposure than among kindergarten and first grade teachers. This may be due to the relative immaturity of the children and to their presumably higher susceptibility.

In the formation of health habits there seems to be more evidence of a tendency to appeal to health interest as a means of forming these habits than to making them a matter of course. Further, checkings indicate that to form these habits some use is made of extrinsic reward such as giving of stars, ribbons, etc., for the performance of the desired habit. In how far such means are defensible from a mental hygiene viewpoint for the different age levels would be an interesting question for discussion.

There seems to be general agreement as to the importance of good postural habits since all acts having to do with the conscious acquisition of good posture are checked as being performed frequently on all three levels though rated as of less importance by nursery school than by kindergarten or first grade teachers.

A general study of this section impresses one with the universal attention given to the protection and health care of the children and to the importance attached to the provision of hygienic surroundings. One can but wonder, since far less attention seems to be given to the formation of good health habits, whether the health protection is often given to the exclusion of attention to the formation of those habits which more than anything else would insure that health. Perhaps it means rather that attention to such habits is being given so incidentally in the course of wholesome everyday living that it cannot be recognized in acts so overt as to admit of checking.

Throughout the study of these sections which have to do largely with the so-called routine activities of the children one is constantly impressed with the emphasis given to the acquisition of skills in the routine processes. Doubtless the learning of such skills is of fundamental importance in a wholesome well-ordered life. Doubtless early childhood is the optimum period for the learning of such skills but again and again comes to mind the question of whether these skills are being learned at the expense of those attitudes towards the acts performed which would insure their continuous willing performance. Again and again one wonders at just *which* stage of development each skill could be learned with the most desirable *ultimate* result. From the research worker must come the answer.



We view the world with our own eyes, each of us, and we make from within us the world which we see.—*Thackeray*

Science vs. Sciences in the Elementary School

BERTHA STEVENS

Author, *Child and Universe*, Downer's Grove, Illinois

NATURE is one. This is an old idea gaining new support and interest. Sir James Jeans in his last book, *The New Background of Science*, says that science is only just entering upon its latest and most comprehensive problem—the study of the universe as a single entity. He points out that the different sciences have each drawn their own pictures of small fragments of nature which form their special objects of study; and that it is now being discovered that these fragmentary pictures piece together to form a consistent whole.

We are being forced to a recognition of the interdependence of the sciences because of the interdependence of the processes of nature. In this decade we find astronomer and physicist working together closely, and we look to the physicist as much as to the astronomer for the extension of knowledge and the promotion of new theories in the astronomical field. Thus it is we find among recent books such titles as *Stars and Atoms*, *Atom and Cosmos* and *The Borderland of Astronomy and Geology*.

What can children learn and observe that will give them some realization of this wholeness and oneness, interrelation and interdependence of the universal creation? They can be told the assumptions of science regarding the origin of their earth and other planets; also that physical tests show the sun, its planets and their satellites—and those distant suns, the stars—to be composed of identical substances. They can be told the assumptions of science concerning the continuing story of evolution, which begins before the birth of worlds from the sun and comes up to and looks beyond the present attainment of development—both inorganic and organic—on our own world, the earth. They can see in this continuity of events

evidence that the known creation, at least, is one. They can find concrete illustration of this sequential, progressive, and often cyclic, development on every hand. They can see the processes whereby rock becomes soil and soil becomes rock; they can see the ocean making or removing coast land; they can watch the development of a seed into a plant; and they can note the successive transformations which occur leading to the caterpillar's final emergence as an egg-depositing moth.

The net-work of interrelations in nature is further intimation of its oneness. Children can be aware of illustration of this, for example, in the linkage between earthworms and the soil whereby the soil is loosened and made porous to an extent which aids the growth of vegetation; the linkage between flowering plants and the higher insects in the matter of pollination; between seeds and birds in the matter of seed dissemination; between standing forests and rainfall; and the interrelations between sun and earth whereby are supplied the light and heat which make possible the development of life as we know it.

Physical forces, known by a range of terms including electricity, polarity, cohesion, chemical affinity, radio-activity, gravitation, can be illustrated in laboratory experiment. Children can learn that these are believed to operate not only in the earth but in other bodies of space, and that extension of knowledge concerning these may be science's road to the most revealing knowledge of the universe as a whole.

Again, nature is indicated to be a unity in that seemingly separated and unrelated parts—such as snow crystals, plant forms, shells—may be shown to be governed in the matter of form by the same pervasive, unvarying, mathematical laws. Samuel Colman's book, *Nature's Harmonic Unity*, illustrated amply with drawings and photo-

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the introduction to a series of four articles by Bertha Stevens on natural science teaching. *CHILDHOOD EDUCATION* for March, 1932, contains an article, entitled "Earth Science" which deals with minerals. It might be regarded as belonging to this series.

graphs, is a useful aid to the concept of nature's oneness in form. That this can be verified by children to some extent a later article will show.

Whether or not it is conceded that science has established the physical continuity of the evolution of human life, it may be noted that some scientists, philosophers, poets—and children—make statements which are in the direction of a belief that we and

This new emphasis upon wholeness in the development of scientific knowledge calls for recognition in curriculum and text-book. Children need to grow up in the habit of thinking of the earth as a unit and as part of a greater whole; they need to gain this concept in the primary grades at the time when they begin to relinquish their invented, magical theories of the relationship of people, earth and sky. The first years of science



Courtesy of Nature Magazine

It is not chaos or death—it is form, union, plan.—Walt Whitman

nature are one in a deeper sense than the physical aspect. Eddington says, "The physical entities are only an extract of pointer readings and beneath them is a nature continuous with our own." Walt Whitman wrote, "There is that in me—I do not know what it is—but I know it is in me . . . Something it swings on more than the earth I swing on." John Dewey says, "The fundamental process of life becomes one of connecting ourselves with the connectedness of the universe." The findings of Jean Piaget in his book, *The Child's Conception of the World*, point to children's assumption in early childhood that there are no definite limits between themselves and the external world.

should build the background into which subsequent special knowledge can fit. They should unfold the idea of cosmos, which means an orderly, integrated functioning of the whole.

The issue of *The New Era* for January, 1932, is a symposium of opinions regarding elementary science teaching. The contributors support each other in an appeal for science to be taught as one whole; for abandoning the old idea that this study must start in water-tight compartments of the so-called separate sciences. They unite in insisting, as *The New Background of Science* insists, that nature is one and not many. They promote the opinion that children need the whole picture; that specialization can

well come later. They show that any thorough-going answer to a child's question in the science field is likely to cross the bounds of several of these artificially separated "teaching subjects." Shelley wrote,

"Nothing in this world is single.
All things by a law Divine
In each other's being mingle."

Various concrete suggestions have been advanced for promoting this improved kind of teaching. The method of educating children in science by starting with some scientific interest and so far as possible following through all its principal ramifications is one way. But I question whether this is as successful in supplying the picture of wholeness as it is in teaching interdependence; and I think it must offer difficulties of articulation of subject matter as children pass from grade to grade. Another method is that of using the seasons as a base, showing their cosmic cause and their effects through different phases of nature which life on the earth illustrates. A third method makes the earth the unit of study, considering it in its relation to the universe as a whole and in its aspects of lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere—including the development of life.¹

It is difficult to find books to be used by children which recognize this principle of wholeness. A clear, accurate and entertaining source of information for children is to be found in the six volumes of the *Pathways to Science*² series planned for first to sixth grades inclusive. There is wholeness of concept in these books, and insistent recognition of fundamental principles of nature. I find, however, that from the age of seven or eight a little information does not satisfy children whose interest and intelligence are aroused. The child who is ready to read

¹ This method is set forth in detail from the teaching standpoint in *Child and Universe* by the writer. New York: John Day Company, 1931.

² Craig and Baldwin, Boston: Ginn & Company, 1932

intelligently any of the material in these books may be ready for all of it. Therefore, the more mature books, Volumes III to VI inclusive, are the most valuable ones as I see it. The three volumes dealing with science and nature in *The New Wonder World*³ series are written from the standpoint of wholeness also, and they have been proved to be useful, reliable and attractive.

If a teacher has provided children with sufficient background, books dealing with parts of nature can find their logical place in the scheme of the whole. Some of the publications to be used this way are the series, *The Story of the World*⁴ and *The Wonders of Nature*,⁵ both issued in small easily read handbooks. Among the single volumes that are helpful are *The Stars for Sam* and *The Earth for Sam*,⁶ and *The World We Live On And How It Came To Be*.⁷

In introducing children to the field of science, information is to be regarded as means to a greater end. If facts are associated continually with ideas, children will become aware increasingly of that transcendent idea, the orderliness of nature. In the writings of Alfred Einstein, Alfred North Whitehead, Edwin Brant Frost, Rollin T. Chamberlin, Forest Ray Moulton, Robert Millikan and others who lead in fields of physical science we find their statement that science rests upon a conviction of the existence of order. Dr. Frost says the orderliness of the universe is his "first thesis." With this concept, and the wonders of organization, form, functioning, rhythm and beauty which attend it, scientists and children can go forward in their search for truth with that consciousness which Einstein has called "a feeling of humble amazement."

³ Chicago: G. L. Shuman and Company, 1932.

⁴ Elena S. Fontenay et al., Chicago: Thos. S. Rockwell Company, 1930, 1931.

⁵ F. M. and L. T. Duncan, New York: Oxford University Press, 1930.

⁶ Maxwell W. Reed, New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1931.

⁷ Gertrude Hartman, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931.

I Am Four Years Old Today

RUTH PERRY

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ANYONE who has watched a group of children one after another proudly announce their "coming of age" must perchance begin to ponder the significance of having passed the fourth milestone. "You cannot do this now, Jerry, but when you get to be four years old then you can." "I have had my birthday so now I am big." As we continue to add to our life span, do we approach each new year with the zest, the satisfaction and the sense of responsibility that we see evidenced in the four-year-old?

Questioning, experimenting, imitating the life about him, the four-year-old is trying to understand and adjust himself to the complex social system in which he lives. Daily experiences with these children give many illustrations of the difficulties which perplex them. "Why do we have carrots for dinner today?" asks one small boy. When told that the dietitian planned the dinner, the next question follows, "Did the chef have to have someone tell him what to cook for dinner? Why can't he cook just what he wants to? Why do we have some one else to tell him what to cook?" A simple question, until one attempts to answer it, then what a searching question into our social customs it becomes! The adult to whom this question was asked later presented the problem to four adults. Each was asked to suggest how he might answer the inquiring four-year-old. The range of replies was challenging, involving employer-employee relationships, color and racial attitudes as well as the knowledge of food values and menu planning. A four-year-old does not take for granted our mores and our institutions. He must ask why. Here an adult might question whether this is not a good beginning for the development of habits of wholesome intellectual curiosity, or shall we reply to these many questions in such a way that the child more passively accepts the conditions of life about him?

A careful consideration of the interests and behavior of the four-year-old seems to point to several phases of growth which characterize development at this level. First, there is joy, a sense of achievement in the phrase, "I am four years old today. You do not need to help turn my sweater right side out for me; I can do things for myself." We can feel a thrill, perhaps, of emancipation from the dependencies of infancy. No longer must the child wait for an adult; now he can get up and dress himself in the morning, choosing what he will wear and how he will wear it. Nor does he follow in approved channels, but tries new ideas and combinations. One finds many attempts at experimentation with "funny" ways of shoe lacing, wearing sweaters backward, eating vegetables with a spoon and pudding with a fork; in fact, trying out new ways of doing everyday tasks. One boy gets ready for dinner, announcing, "Today, first I will get my drink of water, then I will brush my hair, and then I will wash my hands and face. But I can't wipe my hands until after I have washed them, can I?" Otherwise he was reversing exactly a previously accepted routine. Does this behavior have any other aspect than that of trying adult patience? Is it at all important how the adult accepts these deviations from customary behavior? It seems that we find here the germ of flexibility, that at four years of age we might be laying the foundation for recognizing when one can and when one cannot be flexible.

While watching this type of experimental behavior, the adult may notice the beginnings of another capacity, that is, a sense of humor. Somewhere about this age we find a new awareness to situations which border on the ridiculous. Funny sounds, funny words, clothing worn in unusual ways, garbled words or phrases, the wrong name or queer names for associates, play on words; all these send the children into gales of

laughter. An adult was reading to the children. The poem used the expression, "Who sits upon the pillow hill." Immediately there was merriment with endless repetition of "pillow hill-pillow hill-who ever heard of a pillow hill." Teddy, ready for bed, put the heel of his slipper on his toe. This was a very funny situation, requiring adult guidance to keep it within limits. How the adult responds to this seeming nonsense seems to be worthy of consideration. Are some of the adults today with a meager sense of humor a result of the misunderstanding of their silliness by the adults who cared for them? Some one said, "Have a drink of water." "Bahter," repeated Lee, "did you say bawter?" Others join him, playing with the word until finally one says, "butter." Then they query, "Did you think that you could drink butter?" and everyone laughs at the fun.

Closely related with freedom from dependence, we find many examples of how the four-year-old responds to and tries out his feeling of control over processes which heretofore were accepted passively. "Today I am going away with my mother so I must be sure to take a very long nap," and Lee goes to bed and to sleep. "Last night I had a very good sleep and today I do not feel sleepy," and Lee just rests during naptime. "But I want to go to sleep today, for then my daddy lets me talk to him a very long time after supper," comments John as he prepares for his nap. A year later he still accepted his midday nap without reservations. On a beautiful sunshiny day Teddy comes indoors saying to himself, "I have just been unfriendly; I am going to sit here and think about it for a minute or two, then I'll go outdoors again."

Sometimes we find the recognition that one cannot control all one's activities without help. Nancy says to an adult, "I think I could go to sleep this afternoon if you will sit by me for a little while," and Nancy does relax and go to sleep. A few days later Nancy says, "You do not need to help me today; I am going to go to sleep by myself," and she does. Teddy is throwing sand. John comes to the adult, "How can I teach Teddy not to throw sand in my face?" Thus there

is growing, little by little, a good balance between "I can do it myself" and "I need some help."

Another evidence of growing up may be found in the way a four-year-old accepts the criticism of his peers. The spontaneous natural comments on one another's behavior seem to indicate that at this level the child may begin to accept criticism in a creditable manner. If this is true, is it not a vital reason for providing the four-year-olds with companions of their own age? Could we avoid some of the difficult social adjustments of later life if our children continued from this simple beginning to meet critical analysis of their work in a satisfactory manner? Three children were playing with packing boxes and boards. "I am the mother pig," says one little girl. "And I am the father pig," replies a small boy. "Oh no you are not," says the mother pig, "father pigs don't have dirty noses." "But sometimes they do," as a handkerchief is drawn hastily from a nearby pocket.

A group of children are playing with balls. Soon Jane laughs loudly and calls out, "You talk funny, Jerry. You shouldn't say 'frow.' Can't you say 'throw'?" No immediate reply is given; later the adult hears Jerry softly practicing to himself, "frow, no; trow, no; throw—that's it."

Tommy made an airplane with wings, propeller and tail. It represented much effort in sawing and nailing. As he proudly displayed it, Teddy commented, "That's not a good airplane; it hasn't any wheels on it." Tommy looked disappointed, then with a brightening expression replied, "but all airplanes don't need wheels, specially when they are up in the sky." An adult offers two milk bottle tops as possible wheels. Tommy accepts the suggestion and later comments to himself, "real airplanes do have wheels."

Jerry while playing with Dicky remarks, "You are not a very good helper, are you Dicky?" Whereupon Dicky replies, "No, I are not today; sometimes I are, though." In these daily experiences of give and take, the adult seems to have a very definite responsibility in providing an environment in which criticism will be given and accepted.

Another type of growth during the fourth year might be expressed as a new sensitivity to the world around the child, both to physical phenomena and social relationships which a year ago were taken very much for granted.

The weather, always a source of interest, is seen as a determinant of activities. Nancy, having just recovered from a cold, was playing indoors one foggy day. After a few minutes of solitary play she wanted some playmates. Coming to the door she called to the adult in a most charming manner, "Are the children coming in soon? I was standing by the window and I thought it looked as if it might be going to rain." John, on a rainy day, asked, "Is cod liver oil bottled sunshine? Then I had better have two spoonfuls today." Jerry, listening to thunder, asked, "Where is that noise?" When told that it was up in the sky, he continued, "Up where the clouds are? I guess they are just bumping into each other." During a walk in the woods in the early spring time, one child comes and grasps an adult's hand. A few minutes later he comments, "It is so quiet it almost makes me afraid."

The days of the week become important in conversation during this age with many mixups in terminology. "Tomorrow my daddy went to Boston and he is coming back yesterday." "When is tomorrow?" "What day is today?" "Does Friday come after Thursday?" "Why does Friday come after Thursday?" "Do we have school on Sunday?" "But we have Sunday school on Sunday. Why do we have school and Sunday school?"

There is great interest in age. "How old are you?" "Is seven years older than four?" "Yes, because my brother is seven and he is much bigger than you." "Do you have a birthday? Does everyone have a birthday?" The clock takes on a new significance. "What time is it now?" "How many minutes will I have to play?" "Is three minutes longer than five minutes?" John asks Teddy, "Do you like me?" "No," replies Teddy, "I don't like you now, but I will like you in five minutes."

As well as a growth in orientation in time,

we find a more conscious effort to become better oriented in space. "Where do you live?" "Which way do you go to get to your house?" "I live in Elkins Park; where do you live?" "I know where the chef is working. Is the library right near the chef's steps?" "Does the same train go to New York and Washington?" There is also much pleasure in being given responsibility to carry messages or to go on errands around the adjoining buildings. When the adults are alert to the child's possibilities, it seems that in these new interests and awarenesses there lies the opportunity of promoting worthwhile habits and attitudes. Cannot this be done to best advantage while these activities are just beginning to have meaning for the child?

Four-year-olds are noticing and using the social courtesies of the grown-up world. A plate of sandwiches is passed at dinner. "No thank you," says Jerry. "No thank you," says John, and so on around the table. Soon afterward Jane reaches for a sandwich, "I would like a sandwich, please," and having taken one says, "Thank you." By the time this has been repeated by each child in the group, all feel grown up and satisfied. From an adult point of view, it might seem simpler to insist upon either taking or refusing the sandwich when first passed. Except for adult annoyance, there has been a satisfying experience in the practice of social customs. This excessive interest will soon be satisfied and sandwiches may be taken with less ceremony.

Words and phrases take on new meaning and call for explanation. An adult said to Jerry, "Everyone is indoors" and Jerry's quick reply, "Who is everyone; when did he come to school?" Teddy overheard two adults discussing a child ill with a gastrointestinal upset. "What kind of an upset did you say?" asks Teddy. "Does that mean he is sick? Does he have a temperature? Does he have a sore throat? Does his tummy hurt? Will he give it to someone else? What kind of an upset do you call it? Oh!" and having satisfied his interest he looks for new worlds to conquer. Lee brought some tickets to school. An adult questioned him, "Are your

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tickets for the train?" "No," replied Lee. "Are they for the concert? Are they for the Zoo?" After replying in the negative to several such questions, he explained, "They are just for John; I brought them to give to him." Listening to the children makes us suspect that the child is having to learn the use and meaning of many terms which the adult has long since taken for granted. This by no means implies that we have to pre-digest our conversation for children, but does seem to indicate that when we are careful to supply knowledge as the need arises, we may get better coöperation from the child. Moreover, there is great possibility of helping the child to build up a satisfactory body of knowledge, and the means for using this knowledge.

Sources of things are becoming important, also other people's reaction to one's possessions as is shown in this bit of conversation. Donald greeted Jerry on arrival, "New suit?" Jerry nodded. Donald continued, "Did your mama sew it?" "No," replied Jerry, "she bought it at Wanamaker's. Do you like it?"

The opportunity to practice behavior that is socially acceptable seems to be one of the greatest reasons for providing group experiences for the four-year-old. Lee has just come to school; soon he spies John coming up the walk. He runs to John, "Hurry, John, you get the bike and I will be the red light." Soon two boys are taking turns riding up and down the walk with a traffic light in the center. However, sometimes a different experience awaits the new comer. John on the way stops by the ladders and says to a group playing there, "Will you play with me today?" A vigorous answer arises from the whole group. "No, we don't like you today; we won't play with you." John then goes to a group on the slide, "Will you let me play with you?" and receives another rebuff. John sits on a packing box, watching the children at play. Later he runs to the rocking board and begins a complicated noisy play, calling loudly, "All aboard, all aboard, all aboard for Atlantic City, New York and Washington." Much activity, much chugging and announcing of stations.

Gradually passengers present themselves. Twenty minutes after John had been refused admission to the smaller groups already formed, the entire group was participating in a train play with John the established leader.

Another method of joining group play may be used. Teddy comes indoors and builds a very satisfactory house with the blocks. Tommy and John remain outside for a time, later coming indoors. Tommy removes his wraps hurriedly and running up to Teddy says, "I am going to play with you, Teddy." "Oh no, you are not; I got these blocks first and I don't need any help." An adult suggests that Tommy use some other blocks in another part of the room. John watches this episode from the doorway, leisurely removing his wraps. Ready to play, he comes to Teddy and comments, "That's a very nice house you have made, Teddy." "Yes," is the reply, "now I am going to make a barn." "Do you need some help?" asks John. "Oh you could help me if you want to." The two boys build together. Later Tommy comes to the house and watches rather wistfully. "I have some more blocks over in that corner; do you want to use them?" queries Tommy. Soon three boys are making a "much too big" house for a dog.

Jane comes to school in the morning. She has with her a large tin cracker box. "No one knows what is in my box, and I won't show it to no one." Every one keeps on with his play, uninterested in Jane's declaration. Repeated several times only to meet with indifference from the group, the box is deposited indoors in the locker. After a few minutes of aimless wandering the box is again brought out. This time Jane walks over to a little girl watching a group at play. "Ellen, would you like to play with me? I have many nice toys in my box." Sometime later a group is playing happily with Jane's toys. Later on during the same morning, Jane is making small balls of clay. She remarks, "I have very many balls and I'll not give any to no one." And nobody cares. After a few repetitions had been disregarded by all, Jane changes to, "See, I

have many balls; would you like me to give you one?" Every one at the table is enjoying Jane's balls and commenting on how well they are made. What are these experiences doing for Jane? Does it not seem that with enough opportunity for trying out ways and means of gaining group approval, Jane will lose the insecurity which shows itself in boastful, domineering behavior, and be able to meet her peers naturally and spontaneously? This can be expected with much better results if Jane is given sympathetic adult guidance.

A small girl is busy fixing tables, chairs and dishes behind some screens. She comes out sweetly and invites four or five children to the baby's birthday party. All accept and a happy time is in progress when a shrill voice is heard, "No, don't you *dare* take another piece of cake." A small boy emerges from behind the screens to seek a new interest. In less than five minutes the party is broken up as one by one the guests resent the unpleasant domination by the hostess.

About this age children seem to become more conscious of likes and dislikes of individuals. The three-year-old usually plays with the nearest companion, but the four-year-old becomes selective. "I like to play with you; will you come over to my house and play with me?" A mother occasionally invited children to play with her small son. One day he became very unhappy over an invitation which had been extended by the mother. No longer can she plan for the guests of her child but must include his plans and wishes. The four-year-old enjoys planning for guests, parties and excursions. When his wishes are respected, these events will be very simple ones, much more so than when the adult takes the entire responsibility. By utilizing this interest, the adult can extend the child's experiences without danger of overstimulation. He can add greatly to the child's general body of knowledge. Moreover, the adult can provide very many, very happy experiences which may become the foundation for adult memories of a happy childhood.

Perhaps there is no phase of four-year-old activities which shows the maturing point of

view so well as those which have to do with social adjustments. During this time he is learning control over fists and heels, but it is a slow process and fights are common. If the adult helps to maintain emotional calm and teaches by suggestion and behavior more mature methods of meeting difficulties, the child gains this control more consciously and with greater ease. Lee and Nancy disagree over whose turn it is to use the bicycle. There is a clash of fists and Nancy reaches for Lee's cap. The adult nearby remarks calmly, "It is not fair to pull off caps, Nancy." The fight continues, grimly and quietly, with caps on heads. They are evenly matched. "Let's talk about it," says Nancy, and the grievance is settled.

There is still another type of growth which seems of great importance at this age level, and that is the way the four-year-old uses play materials. Until this time, his use of materials has been chiefly manipulative, with sheer joy in handling, piling and knocking over the blocks nearest at hand. Somewhere around the fourth birthday, his piles of blocks become meaningful. However, they may have meaning only to him. The adult may be able to discern no difference between the pile of blocks of the younger child and the "house" of the child a few months his senior. Much of the play of the four-year-old lies in this second stage. As his piles become more meaningful and as his ideas grow, his buildings are named and used in his dramatic play. The influence of the adult who is guiding the play at this stage may be very significant for future growth in self expression. During this period of prolific production with seemingly little effort, the child is gaining a knowledge of the possibilities of various materials, and a mastery over these materials. He needs guidance that in this play he may build useful habits which will not have to be relearned at some later period. The questions of how much and what kind of guidance may well be considered thoughtfully by the adult who is entrusted with the supervision of a four-year-old. The answers to these questions may be approached by clarifying the purposes of the guidance and then by a study of what kinds of adult behavior

FOUR YEARS OLD

further the development of these purposes.

The purposes of adult guidance in this particular group has been to encourage independent thinking and doing; to help the child to acquire confidence in his own ability; to give him the necessary techniques in learning control of materials; to minimize the tendencies to ask the adult, "What shall I do?" or "How can I do it?" At a later stage of development the child asks, "What color is a giraffe?" or "How do you make the roof stay up?" During the fourth year the child may reply to adult suggestion, "But I like red giraffes better than the real kind" or "This is a funny house; funny houses don't have good roofs." The child's satisfaction seems to come not from reproducing objects literally or artistically but in his ability to control and experiment with materials. What is the function of the adult in order to further growth yet not interfere with independent thinking?

The responsibility of the adult with the four-year-old seems to be to provide an environment in which facility of expression and confidence in his own ability can be developed. Thus the function of the adult might be described as sixfold: (1) to provide suitable materials for the child's use; (2) to teach the child necessary specific skills and techniques, as, how to wipe excess color from the paint brush, how to hold the saw, and where to saw or paint; (3) to provide time and place for unhampered use of materials; (4) to give enough stimulation through experiences that the child may have something to express; (5) to expose him to satisfying

results of work done by artists; (6) to maintain an environment in which effort finds its own reward.

The four-year-old stands on the threshold between infancy and childhood. His growing independence and his greater sensitivity to the life about him furnish many situations which call for skillful guidance. Some of the questions which have been uppermost this year might include, How much can a four-year-old do and discover successfully for himself? What kind of situations can he handle successfully for himself? What are the best ways to establish social relationships? How much fighting is justifiable? Is there any danger in curbing this fighting too soon?

Another group of questions hinges on the amount of vegetation versus stimulation which is needed at this age. When is it best to let a child watch the world go by, and when does he need to be given some stimulation or definite task to perform? How much danger is there that the child will develop lazy mental habits? These questions, and many more, indicate that the four-year-old period requires intelligent guidance. The adult not only has this responsibility but the opportunity to provide the child with experiences, with words to express himself, and with good habits of physical and mental hygiene. The many incidents of each day call not only for careful thinking but for a wholesome sense of humor. We adults are prone to be *so* satisfied with *our* habits and our customs. Four-year-olds ask us why, and sometimes we well may ponder why. It is a privilege to live with four-year-olds.



Of children he said:

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

The Prophet—Kahlil Gibran

Making Kindergarten Values Known

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THESE are days when all forms of education are being critized and retrenchments are being made on every side.

Strange contradictions exist. On the one hand there is a cry for economy which shall provide nothing but the teaching of reading, writing, and arithmetic to the masses of our American children. At the same time there is a growing demand that the schools shall devote their major attention to the building of character and the prevention of juvenile crime. Even to attempt to build in children the kind of character which will counteract the deteriorating effects on the home of economic insecurity, disrupted family relationships, lowered self-respect and weakening of ethical standards, calls for a broad educational program which demands not only teachers of the highest caliber but reasonable financial support as well.

Another outstanding contradiction which appears is this: assurance by recognized students of childhood that the kindergarten more than any other educational institution lays the foundation for sound character growth and devotes almost its entire program to this purpose. At the same time it is the kindergarten which has been the first to suffer at the hands of the school economists. In many cities, towns and villages throughout the country the kindergarten has either been abolished entirely or the age entrance has been raised so as to give the child only a half-year of kindergarten training. In one small town the first grade children come to school every morning and three afternoons a week, while the kindergarten children are allowed instruction by the first grade teacher only two afternoons per week.

In some communities where the parents have demanded it, the kindergarten (so called) has been retained but the trained experienced kindergarten teacher has been dismissed and some special teacher of music, art or physical education has been given

charge of the kindergarten for a half day. The excuse has been that "anyone can look after the kindergarten children; they only play anyway, and all that the mothers want is a place to leave their children while they go shopping."

Many parents realize that the kindergarten has other values for the child than just a place to play while mother goes shopping but they do not know how to state these in ways convincing to their friends and neighbors who are also the school taxpayers.

How shall we show these values in concrete and visible form and in a manner so striking that even the casual observer cannot fail to see and understand them?

One such effort was made in Grand Rapids last April during the annual convention of the Michigan Congress of Parents and Teachers. Though Grand Rapids has kept its kindergartens intact there are other places in Michigan which have not been so fortunate, and the parents and teachers sought means of bringing before all of the delegates the meaning and worth of the kindergarten program.

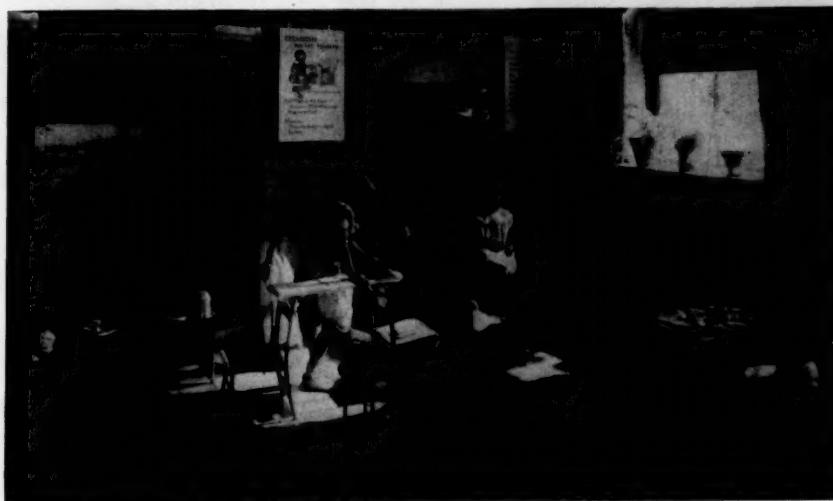
A typical kindergarten room showing the various centers of child activity was arranged in the convention hall in a room off the main corridor. As the delegates entered the hall they could not avoid catching glimpses of this attractively equipped room and nearly all came in to see what it meant and to talk with the teacher guides who were on duty to meet visitors. Many returned several times and often they stopped to make notes in order to carry back to their communities arguments for the kindergarten cause.

A most important feature of the exhibit was the large posters; some were illustrated ones from the Child Welfare Association; others were printed by hand by the local kindergarten teachers. These expressed in short concise sentences the purposes and

values of the various activities which were represented by the equipment and material displayed.

The first center to catch the eye as one entered the room was the playhouse corner with its low gaily decorated beaver-board partitions separating the living room and kitchen. This is where kindergarten mothers dress the dolls in the clothes which we see hanging in an orderly row in the school-made wardrobe. The doll buggy stands close by ready for the morning ride. When meal

In this were beautiful moths and butterflies which had emerged before the child's wondering eyes from the cocoons that they had gathered in the fall. These still hung from their twigs which had been inserted in a bed of moss. On one side of the moth cage was an aquarium where baby gold fish were changing from black to gold, and on the other side was the terrarium filled with tiny ferns and violet and hepatica plants, while through the glass could be seen a delicate white bloodroot blossom.



There are so many interesting things to do in keeping house and caring for a family of dolls.

time comes the tiny table is carefully set with plates, cups and spoons all properly arranged. After the dolls are comfortably seated in their chairs around the miniature wooden fireplace and the baby doll is tucked snuggly into her cradle, the mother returns to the kitchen and washes and irons her children's clothes. What is the value of all this dramatic play of family life? The charts hanging on the wall told us at a glance:

"The dramatic impulse in children's play is the impulse to understand their world." Lee.

Plays of home life develop understanding of family services, nurture potential parenthood, build habits of orderliness, responsibility and co-operation.

Next to the play corner we found the nature table on which stood a large wire cage.

Above the table we read the meaning of these wonders in the life of the child:

Nature study builds habits of keen observation, joy in the world's beauty, wonder at the marvels of life and growth, reverence for the Creator of all life.

Direct contact with living things gives the child a realization of the wonders, beauties and truths that Nature has disclosed.

On either side of this nature table stood easels where on large sheets of newsprint the kindergarten children had manifested their first impulses toward art expression by means of large crayons and fresco paints. These early art forms showed the successive stages of growth from the first experiments in just laying on color, through the symbolic stage in which the forms so unintelligible to

the adult are alive with meaning to the child, to the realistic stage where the child with growing skill shows us his thoughts and feelings.

Nearby other forms of creative expression were seen in figures and objects made of clay. The chart read:

The kindergarten child passes through three stages of development in creative art:

The manipulative stage

The symbolic stage

The realistic stage

In the next corner we found the work bench with its small sized tools. Here were

all the queer little black marks which we call words have wonderful stories to tell and the desire to read these for himself begins to grow. Many children do not have suitable books in the home and must depend upon the kindergarten for this type of stimulating experience.

Power of self expression in language is closely associated with skill in reading and we found that this is developed in the kindergarten by the creation of original stories. These were told by the children and recorded by the teacher. We read the story of Pete, the canary bird, on a card hanging from his cage and other charming examples of original



Looking at pictures and manipulating tools are two important interests of the kindergarten child.

gayly painted carts, boats and airplanes which small children had made and decorated with their own hands. Clay flower pots containing both growing plants and gay paper flowers were ready for an Easter gift for mother. In creative work of this kind habits of social coöperation and group planning as well as manual skill and power to plan and execute are developed.

The kindergarten library corner with its low table and book case filled with a wide variety of picture and story books revealed the way in which the kindergarten prepares the child for reading in the first grade. An interest in books and a desire to read is the foundation for first grade success in reading. As the child pores over his picture books or listens as his teacher reads, he discovers that

story and verse are found assembled in attractive booklets.

One of the most important functions of the kindergarten is the building of health habits. A health questionnaire to parents and individual home record cards illustrated by the children showed how habits of eating, sleeping and cleanliness are developed through close coöperation between the kindergarten teacher and the parents.

A little table set with cup and napkin held a card which read, "We drink fruit juice or milk every morning at 10 o'clock."

Garden tools, carts and wheelbarrows suggested a means of supplying the child with healthful physical exercise.

A safety unit in which toy trucks and carts made by the children had been arranged on a

table with little traffic lights and signs showed another way in which the kindergarten child is taught habits of health and safety.

On the farther wall of the room where they could not be overlooked, several large posters met the eye. These emphasized the economic values of the kindergarten program as well as its educational values. Teachers must learn to speak to parents and taxpayers, to boards of education and to city commissioners in terms of economics as well as of education. They must show that kindergarten training is an economy in the educational life of the child and that it gives full value for the money expended. The charts read:

The kindergarten is the most economical means of providing education for the five-year-old.

At five years, a half-day in kindergarten is worth more than a whole day in the first grade.

"The kindergarten child has 33 per cent more of a chance to complete the first grade in one year than has the first grade child without kindergarten experience." From a study by C. A. Pugsley.

The kindergarten is the link between home and school. It fosters healthy bodies, alert minds, skilled eyes and hands, ability to work with others, and so lays the basis for school work.

On the table beneath these posters were pamphlets for free distribution. Many of these were secured from Miss Leeper of the National office of the Association of Childhood Education at Washington, D. C. They included "Research Findings in Relation to Kindergarten Training as a Factor in School Life," and "Meeting the Present Emergency in Education."

In addition to these, copies of Miss Patty Hill's article, "Shall the Youngest Suffer

Most?" were distributed with the permission of *Parents Magazine*.

Such an exhibit as this does more than picture the kindergarten only as a pleasant place to which the child likes to go. It reveals the underlying educational values in a way that is readily grasped by even the casual observer. The kindergarten teacher must lead parents not only to see these values, but also she must show them how to express them to others in forceful convincing fashion. She must provide them with arguments to give to local and state boards of education and to state senators and representatives. It is they who make the decisions regarding the distribution of educational funds, and their ears are open to the voices of parents and taxpayers.

It is the latter who must make their wishes known, who must press their demands for maintaining the kindergarten as an integral part of our educational system. But we cannot expect even willing parents to formulate the arguments for themselves. This is the teacher's responsibility. She must show parents how to express the values of the kindergarten in forceful, telling language which will carry conviction to the public and win support for the cause.

While the exhibit described was visited by over a thousand interested mothers, it did not reach as many fathers, and fathers must understand as well! Their help, too, is needed. Their voices once raised will carry far for they are quick to understand and ready to speak when fully convinced.

How then can we bring the kindergarten with its purposes before their eyes? Perhaps in a vacant store on a main business thoroughfare where fathers pass every day; perhaps in a public park or museum or library which fathers frequent. Who will try some other experiments in reaching fathers as well as mothers and send the results to us all?



Wouldst thou know how to teach the child? Observe him and he will show thee what to do.—*Froebel*

Thanksgiving—The Making of a Festival

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AFESTIVAL is a group celebration of a particular day, idea, or feeling. It comes from the "feste" days of Europe when an entire neighborhood participated in joyful celebration of some event of common interest to the group. When we use the festival in school, we desire to have the same group expression. There is no audience, for nothing is done for its effect as an observed thing. All is done for its effect on the participants and everybody present is a participant. For that reason everyone must know what he is helping to celebrate. He must be helped to an understanding of this idea if that is to be true.

In the case of a child in school, the ideas involved should be a part of his experience for a long enough time before the festival so that he can understand what he and the others are doing. The appropriate feeling can be built up by means of music, poetry, discussion and story, so that he senses the dignified gratitude of Thanksgiving, the gay fairy-play spirit of Hallowe'en, and the beauty and love of Christmas. In the case of adults, mothers and fathers who come to school on the particular day of the festival, explanation should be made that they are part of the experience, not an audience. The more vital the participation, the better the festival. That is to say, the more each child in the school can be made to feel that he, personally, helped to plan, make decisions, think through problems, get preparations in order, and helped on the day of celebration, the more the experience will mean to him.

In the kindergarten-primary grades, Thanksgiving should be taken literally. It contains two ideas young children are capable of assimilating. In fact, if all adults had them as part of their working philosophy, life might be sweeter for a good many people. The first one is, How much we all have to appreciate, to enjoy, to be thankful for! The second is, What can I do to give someone

more unfortunate than I greater reason for gratitude? In the past we have used material that was entirely beyond the comprehension of the children for our celebrations of particular days.

The most beautiful festival based on these two ideas can be planned and carried out by young children. All beautiful things are quite simple and of course there is added reason why a festival made by kindergarten, first and second grade boys and girls should be simple. It must be if it is to be made by them and thoroughly understood by them. Many of us have had experiences which indicate the simplicity of idea and activity that is satisfying to kindergarten children. We sometimes make things complex for them without realizing that we are.

To prepare for a Thanksgiving festival, experiences within the comprehension of the group should be introduced. For example, a simple Thanksgiving prayer or hymn might be learned just for its sheer beauty and the joy of saying or singing its lines. Walks in the woods, romps in the leaves, and rides into the country may be taken to see the lovely changing fall world. The teacher may bring in some poetry about fall. She may make up a little tale of a group of children who enjoy playing in trees, catching falling leaves, picking pumpkins, gathering nuts, and running under the blue sky. The child's way of showing his feelings is by doing rather than by saying, so that he likes stories that tell of doing things. There may, perhaps, be a story about a little boy and girl whose father is out of work. Boys and girls in the story may take them food so that they will not be hungry. These stories add to the experience of the children and it is out of experience that creative effort comes. Possibilities are suggested here to place emphasis on the fact that no rich experience can be dictated by another but must evolve out of the situation in which it is to develop.

After such beginnings, the problem may be, Who would enjoy our festival with us? If we were to invite the first and second grades to come, what would we have them do? Shall we ask them to make some plans, too? What can we do together? The intelligent teacher realizes that the boys and girls must do a majority of the talking, thinking, planning and doing if they are to enjoy and learn by their experiences. She will arrange the situation so that she stays in the background, giving advice and ideas only when asked or when an impasse results. Experience in weekly assemblies will have helped the children develop initiative in making their own plans for the Thanksgiving festival.

This group planning may result in a decision to bring food to school to be given to someone who needs it. A list of possible foods may be made. The list will grow and grow from day to day as the children think of other things to be added. In line with the question of the food may be the plan of how to care for it at school. How can a table be fixed on which to arrange the gifts? It will take a big place to care for so many things. Where shall the table be placed so that it may be enjoyed by everyone? Someone may suggest making a pyramid of the fruit and vegetables. Experiment in arranging the table will provide the best kind of art activity. In creating new effects the children will have a real aesthetic experience.

Perhaps the idea of a processional may develop. In olden days folk used to celebrate the harvest by having a procession and carrying part of their harvest in their arms or on their heads. When the children walk into the room carrying their gifts, a slow rather stately march may give them feeling for the meaning of a processional as no amount of explaining could do. Children quickly catch the mood and feeling of rhythm so that the processional need not become a dictated activity, but be a natural, spontaneous, creative expression.

Thus little spots of experience grow which are materials out of which to plan, to make, and to enjoy the festival. At no time should

the festival as a whole be practiced. When that is done, the spirit is gone. If it is done again, it will be a poor dead thing done only for effect and not with feeling.

The wisdom of indicating what sort of festival might follow these experiences on the last day before Thanksgiving is doubtful. It is far better to let your own imagination play with the possibilities. Better still if the children are thoroughly alive to the situation, they will tell you what *they* are going to do. If the idea of a festival is utterly new to you a description of some things that children have done may help you in guiding your children to create a festival.

In one school the boys and girls decided to use the gymnasium because it was a large room with no fixed furniture. A half dozen ushers were chosen to seat the children and adults. Ruffs of orange paper were made for them to wear, orange because it is a color symbolic of autumn. One of the teachers played music that had joy, light, and dignity in its measure, for Thanksgiving is a kind of religious ceremony and should not be gay, but deeply happy.

The kindergarten children came first with their gifts; one with a basket of red apples, another with oranges and others with cans of fruits and vegetables. They walked happily but with great dignity for such small individuals and placed their offerings on one of the low shelves of the decorated stand. After each child placed his gift on the stand, he turned and followed the usher to his place on the floor. In turn each class came in and placed its gifts until the gay stand had been turned into a beautiful pyramid of fruits and vegetables that thrilled one with the beauty of the harvest. All the children were seated on the floor in a great semicircle facing the gifts. The pianist played a hymn of Thanksgiving—the hymn the kindergarten children had learned. There was something about the music that made one wish to be quiet. Children and teachers sang the hymn once, then again. One of the upper grade children stood beside the piano and read the psalm of Thanksgiving. A child from one of the middle grades came forward and in simple language

told how thankful she was for the sun and the wind; for the green grass to run on; for the rain that made the flowers grow; for father, mother and school. She was thankful that they could bring these fruits and vegetables to make others thankful too. It was a lovely speech; lovely because the child's efforts at language had been allowed to be sincere, her very own; lovely because her teachers had been wise enough never to make her self-conscious about what she said or how she said it; lovely because she had not rehearsed and memorized a set speech. The reading of a poem by an older child, a poem full of the Thanksgiving spirit; another hymn, then quiet exit from the room as the pianist played music that was full of the spirit so perfectly felt by all.

On another occasion these boys and girls had a processional with their gifts, and the first grade gave a dramatization of the story, "Gentlemen Gay," who know that the way to be happy on Thanksgiving Day is "to give something away."

Meaning, participation, coöperation, and genuine life spirit are the predominating marks of the festival. In order that the festival may have meaning, it must have a subject. By genuine life spirit we mean that

there is a consecutive leading up to *one* moment and expression. The life spirit of this moment has not passed as it would if there were a rehearsal of the events just as they are to occur. It is not perfection of performance that is the object but a creative and beautiful experience for all participants. For this reason the festival may be an important element in the child's education. There is no fear, worry, strain, or over-fatigue from rehearsals after a day that has already been too long, sedentary, and shut-in. There is, instead, that completely enjoyable memory of having taken part in a beautiful celebration or an unrestrained joyousness. It is an experience that results in the greatest amount of growth for each child because he was thoroughly alive throughout; he planned; he made choices; he listened to the ideas of schoolmates; he gave his ideas and help; he adjusted his desires to those of others; he thought through ways of doing and making things; he read; he studied; he created poetry, song, and pictures; he experienced feelings that lifted his spirit and made him free in the finest sense. In our opinion, festivals may be a great educational experience. We would do well to increase their number decidedly.

Stone Walls

Pilgrim and Puritan long ago
Built stone walls that endure today
In the ancient pastures that now are woods:
Then they were gray—and still they are gray.

Men built them heavy, men built them firm:
A law in stone, a limit, a bound,
To keep their cows of a vagrant mind
Shut in the decorous pasture-ground.

Perhaps an arrowy deer might skim
Over commandments of stone for a frolic;
Perhaps one heifer or wildling colt
Would break the bounds of the mere bucolic.

But the gray *Thou Shalt Not!* written in granite
Checked the will of the ancient herds;
They left the woods and the winds of freedom
All to those flying bells, the birds.

*I walked today by a stone wall stretching
Still where the woods retake the field;
The will of the builders, fixed in granite,
Will not—after the centuries—yield.*

*But its crannies shelter the future's forests—
Amber acorn and dark pine-cone;
And I saw by its edge a woodchuck burrow—
The wild home safer because of the stone.*

—E. MERRILL ROOT in *Better Verse*.

Taking the Schools to the People

JOY ELMER MORGAN

Editor, *The Journal of the National Education Association*, Washington, D. C.

HOW can citizens be led to understand better the significance of the school to their children, to themselves, to the community, to democracy? While outside agencies of press, radio, and public meetings are important in the program of interpretation, they cannot do one-tenth as much as the teacher who will visit the homes, meet the parents, and assure them of the vital interest which the school takes in the welfare and progress of their children.

American Education Week is a good time to begin a program of home visiting and school interpretation which will extend throughout the entire year. American Education Week has grown from small beginnings to a point where it reaches literally millions of people—last year 8,000,000 citizens visited the schools. It will be observed this year from November 5-11. Teachers of young children who wish to make their influence count to the full will not only observe this great occasion in their own rooms; they will give leadership throughout the school system and through local and state associations to see that the observance is universal.

VISITING THE HOMES

There is no branch of the school in which there is a greater body of fascinating material to interest parents and citizens than in the kindergarten. The kindergarten affects the growth and development of children at points which parents can verify by their own observation. They can see the work of the kindergarten in the lives of their children, in specific outcomes of habits, skills, appreciations and knowledge.

The kindergarten teachers of America were pioneers in the development of home-school relations. They were the first to visit the homes and to appreciate the value of contact between parents and teachers. They were quick to realize the almost endless opportunities which the kindergarten teacher

has for the guidance of parents in child care and training. Every kindergarten teacher should be a visiting teacher. During this period of crisis there is perhaps no single thing that teachers can do which will so directly, immediately and powerfully affect the attitude of citizens toward the schools as to make personal visits to the homes of children and to plan with parents for a better opportunity for those children.

Visits to homes can be made a source of delight to both teachers and parents. Home visiting will not succeed if it is put on the drudgery level. By careful planning teachers will learn how to get the best results in each individual case. They will find answers to such questions as: What is the best time to visit? What preliminary arrangements should be made with the home? What can one best say on going into the home? How can the parent be made to feel the teacher's abiding interest in the child's growth and development? What special help can teachers give to children in the less fortunate homes where poverty, disorder and discord are the daily environment?

MESSAGES TO PARENTS

Next in effectiveness to visiting the homes directly is the practice of sending leaflets or messages for the parents into the homes along with the report cards or through the children. A Kindergarten Packet containing sample copies of home-school leaflets which have been developed by the National Education Association may be used for this purpose. Last year's kindergarten leaflet, *In the Garden of Growing Children*, is still available at the rate of \$2 per thousand copies or 25 cents per hundred.

The special 1934 kindergarten leaflet is entitled *The School and Your Child*. Fifty copies are enclosed in the packet together with 50 gummed stickers done in color from which pupils may make a special booklet to

take home to their parents. Teachers may wish to read this leaflet to their pupils or talk to them about ideas it contains: How it would be hard for parents to teach children at home if there were no schools and how some children would miss a chance to read, to sing, to play games and to enjoy the fellowship of their companions and teacher.

TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT THE SCHOOL

To interpret the school to children is second in importance only to reaching the parents themselves. The cheerful and interesting kindergarten is a place of joy to the young child. Its activities are a source of never-ending satisfaction to him. He wants to share his school experiences with his father and mother. Yet when one looks through the reading material developed for young children he looks almost in vain for even a vocabulary which would help the child to speak to his parents about his school, what it does for him, his appreciation of his teacher and his companions in the classroom. Even the youngest child in the primary grades can be taught to appreciate the school and to think of it as a place where he learns to grow. The Kindergarten Packet has some interesting suggestions along this line.

INVITING PARENTS TO VISIT THE SCHOOLS

While thousands of schools throughout the country feature special exhibits and demonstrations during American Education Week, the doors of the American school should be open at all times to parents and citizens. The kindergarten-primary school is perhaps closer to the parents than any other. Its teachers have been alert to seize and to make opportunities for helping parents as well as children. Many progressive communities have converted their kindergarten and nursery schools into guidance centers, thus enlarging their field of service without undue additions to the budget. Parents who are made welcome in the lower grades are more apt to be interested in the future.

IMPROVING COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

A close contact with the patrons of the school naturally leads teachers to become acquainted with the social and economic problems of their communities. They see the effects on the child's health of bad housing and lack of privacy. They observe how the child's mind is formed by community standards and tastes. Each teacher informally and without making hard work of it might well begin to explore children's minds and emotional patterns to sense how they are being formed. What influences are shaping them? Is it the deliberate and conscious teaching of parents? Is it reading and discussion in the home? Is it the school? The radio? The movie?

When teachers form the habit of making such observations every time they talk with the child they will see points which call for effort outside the classroom. The child's mind must be safeguarded from pollution just as we safeguard the sources of the water he drinks. What goes into his mind comes out in his life. There is a growing tendency in children's periodicals and radio programs to encourage children to do and want things which would be contrary to the best judgment of their parents. Would it not be a good plan to boycott systematically products and firms which seek to come between children and their parents?

The individual teacher may feel powerless at first in this effort to safeguard the child's tastes, attitudes and appreciations but as he works on this problem he will find many things which can be done easily. Perhaps the first and most important thing is to make parents conscious of the significance of what goes on in the child's mind—to make them realize that the child's mental and emotional experiences of today will be his attitudes and ideas of tomorrow, and that he is laying irrevocable foundations which will either limit or advance his welfare throughout the coming years. There is no trusteeship which involves such opportunity and responsibility as that of seeing that the child has his chance to develop the best possible patterns of mental and emotional life.

History and Geography in the Primary Grades

BESSIE KIBBLEY LACY

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THE modern conception of the teaching of history and geography in the primary grades offers rich opportunities and a thrilling challenge to all teachers of these grades.

Each teacher has a course of study to follow, but the courses of study in history and geography are worthless to child growth unless the teacher finds a way to inoculate them with real "life." It is the teacher who must take these suggestive skeletons called courses of study and give them iron injections in order that they may become vitalized. She must make them stimulating to child growth which means a development toward definite, desirable goals.

In the first and second grades the teacher should be very conscious of the fact that she is to build up for the child of this age a geography and history background. She must be just as aware of this development as she is of the progress in reading. Many of our primary schools are one-sided and are overloaded with the teaching of reading. The first and second grade child needs to have developed the beginnings of a genuine feeling for history and geography. It might be said that he needs to get a "geography and history sense."

There is little evidence in many first and second grades that the children are being given the feeling for geography and history. It is very unusual to find a globe or a map visible in a primary grade. It is the exception rather than the rule. Yet children of six and seven are fascinated with a globe or a large map and if given an opportunity will barrage the teacher with questions about them. But how can they ask questions if they are not given the stimuli to promote inquiry?

There was a large globe of the world and several small ones in a first grade library corner. It was not an uncommon sight to see several children at a time fascinated with

the globes, turning them and trying to locate various countries which had been referred to although sometimes the countries were known by color only. Often it seemed that the child of extremely low mentality comprehended very little of what it was all about but time proved that he was becoming conscious of a moving world. One day when one of the slow children was asked why he did not go to rhythm class he exclaimed, "Oh I stayed in the room to turn the big world around."

The method of developing this feeling for history and geography is very simple because every hour of the day is flooded with opportunities for laying this geography and history background.

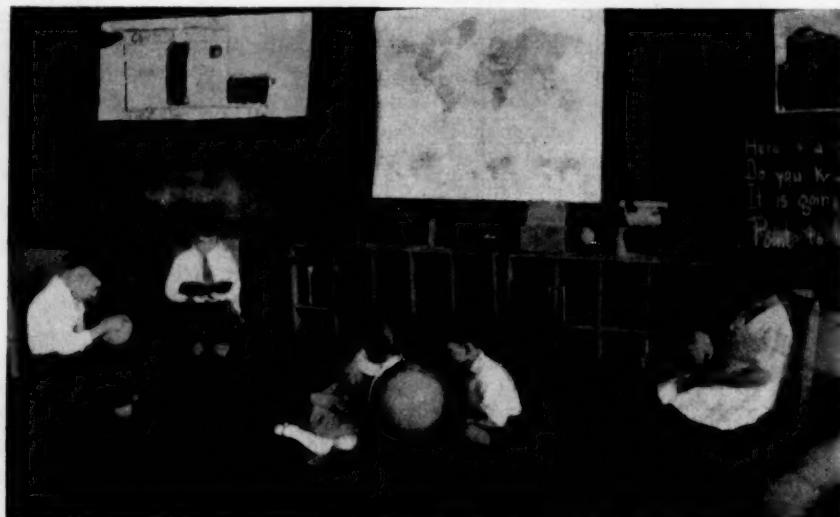
First, the teacher must recognize a real teaching opportunity and become conscious of the need for teaching geography and history. She must be constantly on the alert to develop a true social consciousness in the child and a sympathetic understanding of all peoples of the world. The opportunity to achieve this goal will come to one teacher in one way and to another in an entirely different way, depending on the type of child she is teaching and the kind of "life" she injects into her course of study. The variability of it makes it all the more fascinating and interesting to the vital teacher.

In a first grade there were many foreign children: Germans, Greeks, Italians, Syrians, Dutch, Spaniards, and Americans. A very bad attitude had grown up toward the foreign children. The American children made fun of the foreign mother-tongues, especially when the mothers of these children tried to explain things either to the children or the teacher. The foreign children became very much ashamed of the native language of their parents. At first the situation looked quite grave and the solution to the problem was extremely perplexing. One day at dismissal time the teacher found her first key

to unlock this difficult problem. Katherine, the little blue-eyed German girl, started out of the door to go home and by mistake said, "Aufwiedersehen, Fräulein —." The children laughed at her. The little German girl blushed and in a confused way said, "Oh! I mean, good-bye, Miss —." The teacher knew German and quickly responded, "Aufwiedersehen, mein kind, gehen sie, nach hause?" Katherine looked amazed and

toward the foreign children and mothers and began to realize that their queer sounding words carried messages of love and good will.

Literature also can play a great part in helping to change the attitude of a group of children. The next story chosen to be read to this group of foreign children was Margery Clark's "Poppy Seed Cakes." In the first part of the story where Auntie Katushka



Fascinated with the world.

answered, "Ya! Fräulein —." All the children were astonished to hear the teacher speak in any language but English. At dismissal time the next day the children were asked if they would like to learn to say good-bye in German and without one exception all were making great effort to say, "Aufwiedersehen." A few days later, Hector, the Spanish boy, diligently tried to get Italian, Hebrew, German and Syrian children to say good-bye in Spanish. Soon all the foreign-speaking children wanted to impose their mother-tongue on all the other children. The American children liked it especially and gradually the antagonistic feeling was broken down. These children no longer felt that other peoples and other countries were something to ridicule. Instead the children began to have a kindly feeling

and Andrewshek are introduced as they land in America from the old country, it was extremely interesting and amusing to notice how each Italian, Greek, Syrian, Spaniard and German wanted to claim his fatherland for the home of little Andrewshek and Auntie Katushka. The Italian child found Italy on the globe, while Hulda found Holland on the map. Each foreign child hoped that Andrewshek had come from his native land. The American children found several countries on the map and tried to guess the right country. The foreign children were disappointed when told Andrewshek and Auntie Katushka did not come from any of the countries guessed but from far away Czechoslovakia. This country was pointed out on the map. Andrewshek's journey was traced from the old country across the At-

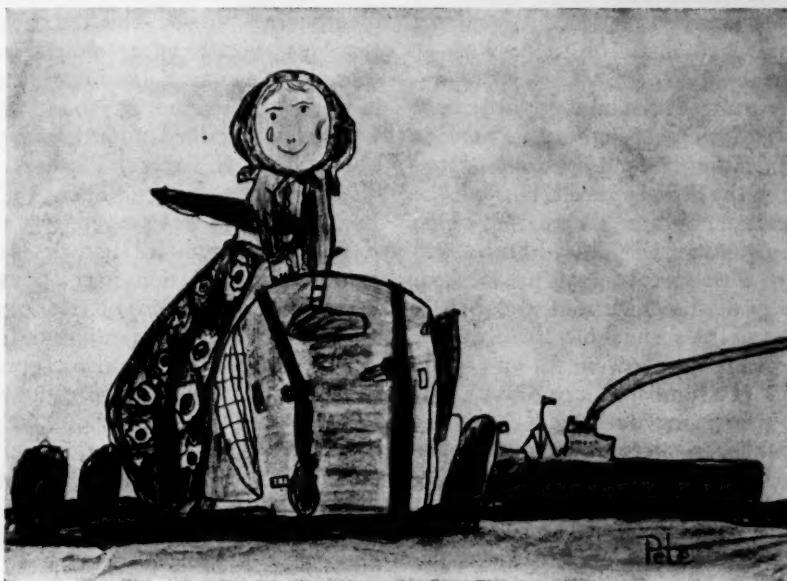
lantic Ocean to New York and then on to Washington where this little boy was beginning to live in the hearts of the boys and girls.

Many pictures were drawn of Andrewshek and Auntie Katushka as they landed in America. Docks, ships, oceans and rivers were all talked about in connection with the discussions about the pictures.

Another way in which this group of children had their geography and history back-

dance, and play whether they speak German, Italian, Spanish or English.

Within a semester it was clearly demonstrated that this group of children, representative of many types of homes, began to evince a cosmopolitan spirit. There was definite evidence that the first steps had been taken in molding a sympathetic understanding of other peoples of the world. Although the majority of those children were



Auntie Katushka came over from the old country.

ground built up was in their folk dances. Many dances and games from other lands were taught them. The work started with the known and progressed to the unknown. A dance which had been learned in the kindergarten called, "Little Playmate Dance With Me," was taught in German. Even Hector, the little Spanish boy who could speak no English, readily learned to sing the folk song. The next dance taught was a Spanish dance. Hector's mother volunteered her help with the easy game and came to school several times to assist with the fun. These games and songs helped to give a kindred feeling of brotherly love for children of other lands. It made these children realize that all children love to sing,

only six and seven years of age, they were beginning to feel a sympathetic understanding toward each other. They showed evidence of growing farther and farther away from that attitude of prejudice and snobishness which is deplorable in any people.

In laying a history and geography background the teacher should make the child gradually realize the relationship between geographical environment and the lives of people. This principle can be developed in a very easy and natural way with primary children. Nearly all primary grades study the home.

A group of children decided to build a wooden house in the classroom. An old platform was secured and great plans were made

for the construction of a house. Soon a trip was planned to a neighborhood lumber yard. A discussion of direction was as follows:

"Is the lumber yard east, west, north or south?"

"How many blocks east do we walk?"

"How many blocks south?"

"On what corner is the lumber yard?"

"What are the names of the streets we travel on?"

For the first time these children were being made conscious of direction. Apparently they had never thought of themselves as traveling in directions.

On the return from the lumber yard many pieces of wood were brought to school as samples. The lumber man who conducted them through the lumber yard told them the kinds of wood seen and the places from which each came. A map of the United States was used to show where great forests are located. There was a discussion about the people who cut down trees and how these people live. Slides of big forests were shown as well as slides of large lumber camps. Much was said about preserving our wood especially while the children were constructing the house.

These children were not expected to remember the names of the trees, the states where they were grown, or how the trees were made into lumber. Then what was the objective in such a plan of work? As long as wood was the medium to be worked with in the activity, these children were having established certain habits of investigation about wood. They were having awakened in them the how and the why attitude which is basic to all real self growth and self development. Will not this type of work lead toward an intelligent understanding of the work in the intermediate grades where the big subject of forestry and natural resources is studied intensively? If each primary grade utilized every opportunity to build upon this incipient feeling for geography, the child would be gradually led to attack big major problems in a more independent and intelligent way.

Poetry work gives many occasions for teaching geography and history. A group of children became interested in "When We Were Very Young" by A. A. Milne. Many times after a poem was read, the children requested to find places referred to on the map. "Buckingham Palace" was a great favorite and after the poem was read the first time the teacher showed pictures of Buckingham Palace which she had brought from England. She told of her experience of standing outside the tall iron fence in London watching the soldiers march. She told about the music and the stately leaders in uniform. England was found on the map. London was talked about. Someone asked about London Bridge. Pictures were produced of the bridge. Then the game of London Bridge was played.

The discussion did not detract one bit from the appreciation of the poem. Instead it seemed to add more interest, enthusiasm, and intelligent understanding to the stanzas.

The study of beautiful pictures opens an avenue for teaching geography and history. Primary children love Van Dyck's "Baby Stuart." When reviewing this masterpiece children are interested to know that Baby Stuart was a little prince who lived long ago in England; to know that he had brothers and sisters who were princes and princesses; to learn that when he grew to be a man he became King James II of England. The children eagerly talked about a real king who lives in England today. It is needless to say that after many great pictures were discussed, these children were getting many peeps into the history of the past. Not only did they get history and geography by discussing these pictures, but they were beginning to get a real cultural background necessary in any educational program.

If the primary teacher would take advantage of the many opportunities afforded her to teach history and geography she would not only enrich the curriculum but gradually help the child to a clearer understanding and a more profound appreciation of the world in which he lives.

Emergency Nursery Schools in New York City

JESSIE STANTON

Director, Coöperative School for Student Teachers, New York City

IN AUTHORIZING the opening of Emergency Nursery Schools, the Civil Works Administration showed a rare degree of social wisdom. The C.W.A. sought to relieve unemployment by providing jobs for as many men and women as possible but it also, tried to find jobs that were worth doing for their own sake. Few people who think about constructive jobs get beyond physical production of some sort—building roads or sewers, for example. The C.W.A. chiefs had more imagination than that. They saw the benefit that might be conferred upon young children in congested districts by putting them into healthful surroundings for several hours each day. They saw how the over-worked mothers would be helped by giving them more hours for their other family tasks or for earning wages. They saw the lasting benefit of giving these mothers a demonstration of how to feed and care for their children. These social benefits leave no physical structures behind, of which one can say, "That was built by the C.W.A." But the social gains per dollar expended upon Emergency Nursery Schools may be greater than the social gains per dollar expended in any other fashion.

The nursery school project gave jobs to teachers, nutritionists, trained nurses, cooks, maids and janitors taken from the unemployed lists. It gave work also to carpenters who made the furniture, cots and other simple equipment and seamstresses who made the sheets, towels, bibs, etc., used in the schools.

Public school officials are responsible in each stage for the administration of Emergency Nursery Schools. Dr. Ruth Andrus, of the State Department of Education, is in charge of New York State. She appointed an executive committee of three members for New York City. Miss Margaret Holmes, acting director of kindergartens in the New York City public school system, is the chair-

man, with one representative from Teachers College and one from the Coöperative School for Student Teachers, the two organizations designated to train the unemployed teachers for their work in the schools.

Nursery school teaching is a new and highly specialized profession. Only a short training period was possible and what a challenge this was both for the incoming workers and the experts in the field. I wish I had time to tell you of our experiences in tackling this together! Work with young children is so interesting and rewarding that most nursery school teachers are filled with enthusiasm for their work and this attitude was quickly taken over by the emergency workers. They were eager, alert, observant and learned quickly. Their training is being continued on the job as each school has a volunteer educational supervisor appointed either by Teachers College or the Coöperative School.

New York City now has eighteen nursery school units of approximately thirty children each, situated in fourteen different centers. Two of these units are in Brooklyn. The children are two and three years old and represent many different nationalities. The committee was faced with a difficult problem in finding quarters for the schools as no money was provided in the project for rent, light or heat. Over fifty buildings were investigated before the ones now in use were decided on. A nursery school requires play space indoors and out, toilet facilities, a kitchen and space for eating and sleeping. Most of the buildings chosen have roof playgrounds, where, when the weather permits, the children spend the whole morning out in the sunshine. Eight groups are in settlements; three in continuation schools; four in an unused theological seminary building; one in an apartment, the rent for which is raised by an interested volunteer committee; and one in a public bath building.

My mind goes back now to the strain of January and February when these groups were being started. Sometimes the difficulties seemed almost insuperable. A terrific amount of planning and organizing had to be done in order to make it possible to use a building for little children, which was not especially made for that purpose. Equipment had to be designed and ordered; workers who were new on the job naturally needed much help and supervision; the details to be attended to were endless.

Let me describe the opening of one school to make this clear. At the corner of Seventh Avenue and Carmine Street stands one of New York City's fine public bath buildings. There we found a very large unused room with two smaller ones just outside. A large roof playground made this an ideal place for a nursery school. A visit to the borough president's office brought permission to use the building, and acquiescence in our request for the installation of a kitchen and toilet facilities, the painting of the quarters, and the erection of a wire fence on the coping of the roof. Under the capable direction of one of the city departments, C.W.A. workers applied cream-colored paint, making the rooms much more light and attractive. C.W.A. carpenters made coat racks and shelving for the children's play equipment of blocks, dolls, clay, crayons, paper, and books, according to our dimensions. A volunteer committee set to work and collected packing cases and small boxes from nearby stores, for the roof playground. The cold was very severe at this time, and the committee secured sweaters, warm underwear and leggings both from organizations and individuals.

Most of the children in the emergency nursery schools come from families who are on home relief. They live in two or three small rooms, often heated only with a coal stove. This does not seem important now but was of real importance last winter. The mothers have to deal with all the problems created by crowded conditions of living and economic strain. Added to this, nowadays, is the presence of the father, who is unemployed, and in some cases has been so for

three or four years, and who is often in a depressed and highly irritable state.

When one considers the way very young children behave, their need for running about and handling and touching everything, it is easy to see what a great relief it is to mothers to have their children out of this kind of home for several hours each day. One of the mothers said the other morning, when she brought her three-year-old back after a week's illness, "I love Louis, but sometimes he makes me so wild, I curse him!" Another mother, in thanking the teacher for what the school had done for her little boy, said, "At home he just gets slapped from chair to chair." The nursery school gives to mothers such as these a respite in which to keep up their courage and preserve their mother love.

In many practical ways the nursery school staff gives help to the mothers. Whenever a child is absent, the trained nurse calls to find out the reason. If the illness is a slight one, she tells the mother how to handle it. In one case, the nurse found an older brother who needed to go to a cardiac clinic; she not only made this possible but also arranged to get books for the boy to read. This mother was having trouble with her teeth and was encouraged to go to a dental clinic. Her whole emotional state improved after the trouble with her teeth had been relieved.

Sometimes a case of serious illness is discovered. One Monday a nurse found a little girl in bed with all the furniture in the room piled on the bed and painters at work on the walls. She realized at once that the child was very ill and summoned a Henry Street nurse who called in a doctor. The child had pneumonia and was probably saved by this prompt help. These specific instances could be multiplied indefinitely. Our nurses have made 1,184 visits of this sort.

The nutritionist also gives practical help to the mothers. The dinner menus are posted each day in school and when the mothers began to ask for recipes, food demonstrations were arranged. These have been successful in all the schools. The mothers come in small groups and through discussion the proper diets for young children become real and understandable.

Budgeting is a serious problem when a family of five receives \$6.25 a week for food. One of our mothers, such a nice intelligent woman, was starving herself in order to feed her three boys properly. "I feel so weak all the time," she said. The store where she bought her food was not clean and the prices seemed high, but as the store was owned by her landlord and the mother owed rent, she did not dare trade elsewhere. The nutritionist called the Home Relief office and reported the store. An investigation must have been made at once for the mother, on her next visit, said that prices were now posted and a thorough cleaning up had taken place. The nutritionist had worked out a week's menus which she gave the mother, who returned the following week, feeling stronger and looking better. "It's so much easier for me. I know what to cook now." How can one measure what it will mean to that family to have the mother kept in good condition? Again I have given only a few specific instances but each day, as the mothers bring the children to school, they come in contact with the nutritionist and have a chance to talk with her.

Sometimes I think that the sincere interest of the nursery school teachers in the children has meant more to the mothers than anything else. During the first weeks of school the teachers made many home visits. One school reported 77 visits made by the staff in two weeks. Sometimes, during the severe winter weather, a mother with a younger baby in the family, found it very hard to get her two- or three-year-old to school. A teacher would call for the child and gradually mother and teacher would become friendly. Or perhaps a foreign born mother would find a member of the staff who could speak her language. One school report says, "The mothers tend more and more to bring their perplexities to us." Often a mother needed help in getting her child to eat. She welcomed the suggestions of the nursery school teacher. "Try giving him a little spoon and small helpings of food. Don't worry too much. He's eating well in school now. He doesn't need to eat a great deal at night."

We found that many of our children were

still having milk from a bottle. The mothers have been told to try giving it to the children from a cup, and since they are drinking it this way in school, it is easier to make the change at home.

Sometimes parents become very angry when the children refuse to come to school. One little boy was brought kicking and screaming. His mother finally slapped his face to make him "be nice." The teacher suggested to this mother that she spend a whole day watching the children in school. The mother stayed and became so interested that she returned every day that week; and the teacher, who said nothing, could see that she was observing everything. Both the mother and child were greatly benefited by this experience. The mother learned from her observation that all little children do things slowly. She learned to speak calmly and not to hurry the child too much. She also learned to use language he could understand.

One mother reported that her three-year-old, who was learning English and Italian, stuttered badly, and that this annoyed the father so much, he hit the child in the face when he began to stutter. The teacher made a home visit and explained to the father the difficulties involved in learning two languages at once, and emphasized the fact that slapping the child would only make him worse. The father listened and agreed. The child's stuttering has almost disappeared now. Again I have given specific instances of how parents have been helped. Let me reiterate that these instances can be multiplied a hundred fold and that the important thing is the confidence the mother has in the nursery school staff and her willingness to go to them when she needs help.

And what about the nursery school staff members themselves, people who have been on unemployed lists, waiting and waiting for jobs? One of them said to me not long ago, "I never knew before that it was fun to work." Many of them feel that they are doing the most worth while work they've ever done in their lives.

There has been an opportunity for people with different training to work together and

the coöperation has been splendid in the schools. The trained nurses who understand children so well physically have learned to understand them better psychologically. All the workers will be better trained when this experience is over.

Now I want to talk about the children themselves and what happens to them in school. Since March 15 there has been a small number of doctors on the project and very complete physical examinations are being given each child. Children needing treatment which the parents cannot afford are referred to the proper hospitals and clinics. So far, 13 hospitals and 42 clinics have been called on for help. The coöperation has been fine. Over 250 children have been immunized against diphtheria and over 60 children have been vaccinated. A number of children are to have tonsil and adenoid operations.

A nurse inspects each child before he enters school in the morning and in this way the spread of contagion is avoided. The children are weighed weekly and most of them have gained steadily.

The nutritionist plans the children's meals and not only is a hot dinner served but the children have tomato juice in the morning and a glass of milk before they go home in the afternoon.

Let me give you a picture of one of the schools I visited. It is a rainy morning, so the children are playing in the big gymnasium on the top floor.

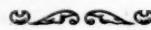
As one enters, the room seems filled with sound and motion. There are 25 two- and three-year-olds and three teachers in the room. Four or five children are using the slide and their inability to take turns means that two teachers are kept very busy starting the children up the ladder one by one, seeing that they do not push each other at the top of the slide, and keeping the mat below the chute clear of children. Each child, as he reaches the top of the ladder, likes to stand there a minute and survey the room. Those behind him on the ladder don't like to wait;

they shout and push. A small boy is riding a red kiddie car, calling, "Ding, ding," as he steers around a corner. A little girl is pushing a baby carriage slowly and he stops a moment to look at her, but says nothing. Some children are running back and forth across the room calling out occasionally as they run. Think what fun this must be after the crowded quarters in which these children live!

A few minutes to play and then a teacher sings, "Putting away time." It is time now to go downstairs to rest and have dinner. Pete, the janitor, stands by the door to carry the wagons and kiddie cars downstairs. Tommy brings his kiddie car as Pete says, "We have to go eat now." Jimmie brings a barrel; Mildred brings a baby carriage. Pete calls out, "Thank you, thank you," as each toy is delivered to him. Then he says, "Get in line with the teacher," and the children line up against the wall. Pete is one of our best teachers! Then down the stairs the children go and after toileting and washing, they sit at their tables to eat. There is little conversation at first—eating is a serious business, but by dessert time there is a good deal of talk. After dinner, comes a long nap, and what lovely pink cheeks the children have after sleeping. One of the great joys of nursery school is having one's own bed. The day finishes with a glass of milk, and then perhaps a story or a few songs.

Through these experiences the children learn to control their bodies, to develop tastes and habits that will promote their health, to live with one another and to be so fully two- and three-years old that never again will they have to be babies.

The social wisdom of the C.W.A. in investing in human values is indicated somewhat by the emphasis of the nursery school projects. Help has been given to devoted and distracted parents, to people deprived of, but anxious for work, and above all to the most important lives we know, those of our young children. The future will show the investment was worthwhile.



Mother Learns More About Reading Readiness

JULIA LETHED HAHN

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ON HER second visit to the kindergarten to learn more about reading readiness, Mrs. Phillips, mother of shy little Bobby, found the room a busy workshop and the children engaged in many different kinds of activities.

"I must have come at the wrong time to learn about reading readiness," she said to the kindergarten teacher. "The children seem to be doing other things at this period."

"On the contrary, this is a very good time for you to come," answered the teacher. "Many of the things the children are doing are contributing to reading readiness although they have no immediate connection with books. Let's walk around the room together and I shall explain what I mean."

First they went to the corner where the children were painting and drawing.

ideas about boats that they wanted to express. Later they will tell the other children about the pictures and get their ideas about them too.

"So many children wanted to draw or paint that we had to devise more easel space. We find that this arrangement works very well. These pieces of Celotex fastened to the rail make shelves for the children's crayon boxes. The long strip of wrapping paper on the blackboard invites the expression of ideas. Sometimes the children draw a series of pictures for a story they know or draw pictures in sequence for a story they make up. Sometimes they mark off a space and make a single picture of something interesting to them.

"One of the most important factors in reading readiness is the ability to express ideas freely and well. Of course children have



West School, Washington, D. C.

A long strip of wrapping paper on the blackboard invites the expression of ideas.

"There are many different ways for children to express their ideas," said the teacher. "Painting and drawing appeal strongly to most children. They express their ideas in this way very freely though their results often seem crude to us. These two children you see are painting pictures of boats. We took a trip to the wharf last week, and when we came home many of the children had

EDITOR'S NOTE: The third article in this series on Reading Readiness by Julia Hahn will appear in the December issue. It is titled, "Reading Readiness in Beginning First Grade."

more ideas to express when they have had many vital first hand experiences. That is why we took the trip to the wharf. Some of the children did not know much about boats before we went."

As they moved on to another part of the room, Mrs. Phillips admired the large boat some children had almost completed.

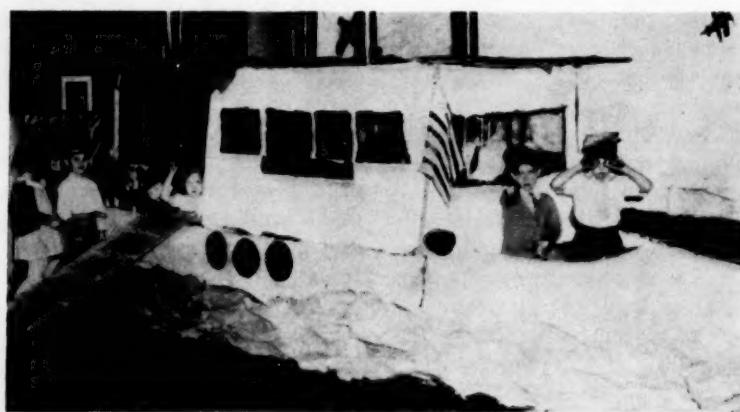
"That is another way in which the children have expressed their ideas about boats," the teacher said. "This is a steam-

boat you see. The children decided that it should have a boiler of some kind for they have learned that water, when hot, makes steam and that steam makes the boat go. Their discussions about the boat led to much additional knowledge about other kinds of boats. See the pictures of sailboats, hydroplanes and ocean liners over there in the Art Gallery. The children brought most of those pictures themselves.

"Perhaps the children can take a play trip on their boat while you are here. Their

"The kindergarten children learn many words incidentally in similar fashion," the teacher explained. "They often need signs and labels in connection with their building activities and their dramatic play. An interest in signs, advertisements and labels is one of the indications of reading readiness."

Soon it was time for the work period to end. The interested mother watched the children respond to the signal; put their things away, clean up the different work corners and gather at the front of the room



Barnard School, Washington, D. C.

Dramatic play helps to clarify ideas and develop self-confidence.

ideas are clarified greatly by dramatic play of this kind. They lose themselves in the unfolding dramatic activity. That type of work has been very good for Bobby. It has helped him become more self-confident, a quality which is a significant factor in the attack of any new problem, particularly the rather complicated problem of learning to read."

Just then Bobby and another boy climbed out of the boat and said to the teacher, "Our boat should have a name, Mrs. ——. Boats always have a name painted on them."

"That is right, Bobby," the teacher replied. "Tap the little bell and ask the children what they think about it."

Bobby promptly called the children together and after considerable discussion they decided to name the boat the S.S. Aquatania. To Bobby's great satisfaction he was asked to paint the letters on the side of the boat.

to evaluate the work they had done and to make further plans.

"This discussion period contributes very materially to reading readiness," the teacher said. "Children who enter first grade should be able not only to understand but to talk freely and intelligently about the experiences which will later be involved in the reading program. Children who have a very limited speaking vocabulary or speak largely in monosyllables or phrases are sure to find reading in books difficult. Of course they learn to speak more fluently and logically when they talk about the things that concern them vitally and personally. Bobby has improved very much of late in 'making longer and smoother stories' when he talks."

"We have noticed a difference in him at home too," said Mrs. Phillips. "But I did not realize that talking had anything to do with learning to read."

She watched the discussion with even

keener interest after that. She was amazed at the good judgement the children showed and the fluency of their oral expression.

"You seemed to use every opportunity to make the children conscious of left and right," she ventured at the close of the period. "Is that important?"

"Indeed it is," replied the teacher. "Children who enter first grade unable to distinguish *left and right* may be seriously hampered in their introductory work in reading. They may not see words from left to right as they read but may 'reverse' letters of words and thus fail to read correctly. We cannot take for granted that children know that words in a line are read from left to right in sequence and that each line is begun at the extreme left. The serial pictures I told you about help to accustom the child to this left-right movement as well as to develop the

story in logical steps and provide for oral expression."

"My, I have learned so much this morning," said Mrs. Phillips as she was leaving. "I know I can help Bobby much more intelligently now. Have you any other suggestion in regard to him?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. _____, "don't let him talk baby talk. He seldom does it at school any more. Children who pronounce words incorrectly, and baby talk is incorrect pronunciation, often have trouble with reading. They do not associate the real word with the printed form and therefore do not recognize it."

"I shall remember that," said Mrs. Phillips, "and I do thank you. I want to see Mary's teacher too. I can see now why she had trouble when she entered first grade. I wish I had known then what I do now."

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR PEACE

Knowledge and hard thinking are
the first necessities of any successful work
for world peace. This does not mean that you must
have knowledge of all the technical problems before you begin
active work, but it does mean that you must do more than not want war.

It means that you must want peace and know why you want it, and that the greater your knowledge of how to get it, the greater your influence will be. The hold of war on men's minds, which is the hold of tradition and of ignorance, must be broken. There is today no reason for war; there is only the habit of war which the world has so far not overcome. To overcome a habit requires first a firm conviction of the need to overcome it, and next constant vigilance, for wherever conscious attention fails, action will follow the established channels. The older the habit and the more it is associated with emotion, the more determined must be the effort to overcome it. The habit of war is as old as civilization, and has always involved the deepest emotions. The attempt to overcome it is the greatest intellectual and spiritual challenge that mankind has ever faced.

The Turn Toward Peace—Florence B. Boechel
The Friendship Press, New York

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

MARY E. LEEPER

NEWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Ten years ago CHILDHOOD EDUCATION began its career. The appointment of an associate editor who will give her full time to the editing of the magazine and the bulletins of the Association is a most fitting and happy way in which to mark this anniversary.

With the addition of the associate editor, Miss Frances McClelland, the Washington Headquarters staff of the A.C.E. is increased from three to four full-time workers. This enlarged staff promises improved service to both members and subscribers.

1934 YEARBOOK

Contributing members and Branch presidents and secretaries may expect to receive the 1934 A.C.E. Yearbook about October 30th. Those interested in the Association will read this Yearbook from cover to cover. If you are not familiar with the activities of the Association, read the Yearbook and become interested.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE MEETS

On October 6th the New England Convention Committee and the executive secretary of the A.C.E. met at Swampscott, Massachusetts, to discuss and complete convention plans. Committee sessions were held at New Ocean House, Headquarters Hotel for the convention.

If you could know of half the delightful plans that New England A.C.E. Branches have made for the entertainment of those attending the convention you would write to New Ocean House, Swampscott, today and make your reservation for June 26th.

A.C.E. OFFICER VISITS PUERTO RICO

Miss Amy Hostler, Vice President representing Nursery Schools, returned in September from Puerto Rico where, at the request of the U. S. Office of Education, she spent six weeks organizing emergency nursery schools.

KINDERGARTEN EXTENSION

Do the people in your community realize the necessity of early childhood education? The Extension Committee of the A.C.E. has prepared for your use facts on the value of kindergarten experience and suggested ways by which these facts and others may be favorably presented to the citizens of your community.

If you did not receive copies of this material last year write to A.C.E. Headquarters now for copies. Postage—3¢.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR BRANCHES

The Federal emergency nursery schools offer to A.C.E. Branches an unusual opportunity. Whether or not these schools become permanent may depend upon the standards that you help them to achieve and maintain. Whether or not the continuance of these schools will lead to the establishment of kindergartens to meet the gap between the nursery school and the first grade may depend upon your attitude toward these schools and your interpretation of their purposes to the public. Make a definite effort to discover ways in which, as a group and as individuals, you can assist those directing and working in these schools.

In some instances the names of presidents of A.C.E. Branches are being given to the state supervisors of the emergency nursery schools. You are the local leaders in the field of early childhood education and much may depend upon you.

OCTOBER A.C.E. BRANCH EXCHANGE

Has the president and secretary of *your* Branch received the October issue of the BRANCH EXCHANGE? If not, it means that A.C.E. Headquarters does not have correct names or mailing addresses for your present officers. Send these names now to A.C.E. Headquarters, 1201-16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C., in order that your officers may receive promptly all communications from Headquarters.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

YOUNG CHILDREN AND LEGISLATION

A Committee on Legislation for Young Children has been appointed by Sidney B. Hall, Chairman of the Legislative Commission of the National Education Association. The organizations with representatives on the Committee are:

Kindergarten-Primary Department of the N.E.A.
National Association for Nursery Education

U. S. Office of Education

National Education Association, Research division

Association for Childhood Education.

In view of the fact that most of the state legislatures convene this year it was decided to have ready for distribution by December 1st a pamphlet covering such points as:

Information on present laws governing the education of young children

What constitutes a desirable or undesirable law

affecting the welfare and education of the young child

Procedure in attempting to enact new laws or modify laws now in effect

Information concerning this pamphlet may be secured from the Research Division of the National Education Association, 1201-16th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PARENT EDUCATION

The fourth biennial conference of the National Council of Parent Education will be held in Washington, D. C., October 31-November 3. There will be institute courses for intensive study of professional problems and sectional meetings for the consideration of significant issues and viewpoints. Information concerning the conference may be obtained from the Headquarters of the Council, 60 East 42nd Street, New York, New York.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE OFFICIAL FAMILY



WINIFRED E. BAIN
Secretary-Treasurer



MARJORIE HARDY
Vice President Representing
Primary Grades



FRANCES McCLELLAND
Associate Editor Childhood
Education

BOOK REVIEWS

Editor, ALICE TEMPLE

The scientific approach to supervision.—This volume on the scientific aspect of supervision¹ completes the series of yearbooks published by the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction of the N.E.A. on the subject of supervision. In the words of the authors the book is an attempt to answer the question, "How can I as a supervisor incorporate the scientific procedure in each of my regular activities, and especially how can I utilize scientific method in organizing my entire supervisory program?"

It is a most stimulating and intensive study of the scientific approach to supervision as it appears to-day. The authors are careful to avoid dogmatism; they stress the need to collect and to interpret scientific data in the field of education and the necessity to develop tools of measurement.

The emphasis is placed on the value of the scientific attitude on the part of the supervisor. Supervisors are urged to apply the scientific method in every act of supervision where it is feasible. At the same time the authors are careful to point out that scientific supervision should be thought of as complementary to co-operative and creative supervision and not as an exclusive method.

As the scientific method as applied to supervision is still a more or less undeveloped field the writers suggest that supervisors experiment and report their findings in order that other supervisors may have the advantage of knowing the successes or failures of others.

The organization of the yearbook is definite and inclusive. A valuable factor in the organization of the book is the brief notes at the beginning of each chapter with the heading, "Before You Read the Chapter." These notes help the reader to catch a glimpse of the educational philosophy of the writer and enrich the meaning of the text.

The first two chapters deal with what constitutes the scientific method and the nature and function of supervision. With these fundamental

factors established on a defined basis the remainder of the book is devoted to the application of the scientific method in the major functions of supervision. A chapter is given to each of the major activities of a supervisor classified under the following headings:

- 1. The organization of supervision
- 2. The planning of the supervisory program as a whole
- 3. The appraisal of instruction
- 4. The promotion of teacher growth
- 5. The conduct of curriculum studies
- 6. The preparation and installation of courses of study
- 7. The selection and preparation of instructional material.

The authors stress the fact that supervision should be a community function and not an isolated school activity. The choice of problems to be studied should be made with due regard to community opinion.

The supervisor who reads the chapter on the value of planning his supervisory program to cover both a long and a short period of time and with reference to the background of the current situation, will find much that will guide him to a richer and more dynamic leadership.

This yearbook will no doubt serve two functions. It will arouse interest in the scientific approach to supervision and through its broad outlook will gain many converts to the point of view advocated. Its second and perhaps its chief function will be to serve as a guide to those interested in developing methods of scientific approach as it is rich in information concerning what has been done in this field and stimulating in pointing the way to work to be accomplished.

The bibliography scattered through the pages of the book is valuable and is based on specific problems arising in the content of the book.

This yearbook should be a valuable aid to the supervisor in helping him to evaluate his activities in the light of present day standards and should point the way to greater achievement.

MARGARET COOK HOLMES
Assistant Director of Kindergartens
New York City

¹ National Education Association, Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction. Seventh Yearbook, *Scientific Method in Supervisory Programs*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, Bureau of Publications, 1934. Pp. xiii + 194.

A much needed report of educational procedure.—The current yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education,¹ although published two years later than was originally anticipated, is nevertheless a timely contribution. So prevalent has the activity movement become, especially in elementary education, so varied are the interpretations of the terms used in connection with it, so widely different are the numerous practices designated as "activities," and so much criticism has the movement brought upon itself that a treatment such as the Yearbook presents is greatly needed at the present time.

The 1934 Yearbook Committee² "was not commissioned to develop ways of evaluating, but to consider a movement now needing evaluation." (p. 6) It, therefore, formulated the following purposes:

1. To secure an historic treatment of the movement as it has emerged from the past.
2. To attempt to define the movement, showing its spread of meanings and its central tendencies.
3. To prepare a descriptive statement that may serve to illustrate sincere ways in which the movement has been developing.
4. To secure critical evaluation of the movement by: (a) a group of educational theorists, and (b) a group of leaders in the field charged with responsibility for the education of a group of children.
5. To study the situation relative to evaluation and to attempt to present some constructive suggestions.
6. To try to bring into focus the fundamental issues involved in studying this activity movement and thus stimulate critical thinking.
7. To make constructive suggestions as individual Committee members, including a few statements upon which some existing agreement was found (pp. 6 and 7).

The Committee is to be congratulated upon the extent to which it has succeeded in realizing most of these purposes. The historic account of the development of the movement supplies an interesting introduction to the report. It points out, as do later discussions, that the principle of activism is in no real sense new. Indeed it is as old as man's earliest education.

¹ National Society for the Study of Education, Thirty-third Yearbook, Part II. *The Activity Movement*. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1934. Pp. xi + 320. Cloth \$2.50. Paper \$1.75.

² Adelaide M. Ayer, the late F. W. Bonser (formerly chairman), Mildred English, Arthur I. Gates, William S. Gray, Ernest Horn, James F. Hosic, William H. Kilpatrick, Lois Coffman Mossman (Chairman), E. E. Oberholzer and the late E. M. Supple.

Probably the effort to define activity as the word is used today in educational discussion was the most laborious of the tasks undertaken by the Committee. It involved, among other things, the analysis of forty-two "expert-made" definitions, twenty-five selected activity curriculums, and fifteen books which were regarded as dealing authoritatively with the subject. The resulting data were tabulated and the tables commented upon at length. The definition to emerge from this elaborate study was a "combined definition" made up of selected quotations from the first ten of the forty-two solicited by the Committee.

A rather complete description of each of six typical ways in which the activity principle is applied in practice follows. This merely emphasizes still further the many widely differing interpretations of the principle.

All of this material on definition and interpretation was then submitted to a number of specialists in educational theory in our universities for their comments and criticism. These seven leaders seem to have responded with genuine frankness and sincerity. Their criticisms and comments include some that are drastic and condemnatory, others severe but constructive and still others generally sympathetic and approving. This chapter of the report is wholesome and stimulating as is also the final chapter in which each member of the committee expresses his own views. These two are among the most interesting and valuable discussions in the book.

On the whole the report has much to offer the thoughtful reader. It makes clear many of the controversial issues; it shows the untenable character of the position of certain extremists in both camps; it emphasizes the need for further evaluation of the activity curriculum through the help of specialists in the field of educational measurements. As one writer puts it, "Any scheme of education that emphasizes the nature and needs of the individual child, as most progressive programs do, has far greater need of measurement than conventional programs designed primarily to impart information and skill to pupils en masse." (p. 164)

This is one, among the many yearbooks published by different educational groups, with which every elementary school teacher should become familiar.

Influence of his earliest drawings on the child's first pictures.—There are certain characteristics of the child's first efforts at graphic representation which have commonly been explained as due to the fact that he tends to draw objects as he

knows them, not as he sees them. He draws mentally rather than pictorially. That the inadequacy of these early efforts at picture making cannot be accounted for altogether in this way is the contention of the author of a recently published pamphlet.¹

As the result of a careful and prolonged study of the free pre-representative drawings of a large number of children between the ages of eighteen months and four years it was found that the child characteristically begins with lines—to which he pays little attention at first—advancing to “making careful, deliberate lines leading out where his eyes meant them to go.” These lines are eventually extended so as to enclose spaces and finally these spaces are combined to make designs and simple compositions. The drawing of pictures constitutes the next step and, as in the previous stages, incorporates the experience that has gone before. Analysis of these drawings reveals that five steps of progress are distinguished by the author, each representative roughly of a six months period. These steps or stages are designated in turn as exploration, control, technique, design and transition to representation. Each is effectively illustrated by several reproductions of children’s drawings.

Thus, according to the author, “before he starts out on his picture career, the child has attained considerable familiarity in drawing lines and spaces, in placing them interestingly and in accomplishing design effects. He has this much to work with when he comes to drawing pictures. He uses this much under a new and added strain. . . . We need not be surprised if, under the strain of adapting his old technique, the child’s product seems, at first, a little disheveled.”

“In the light of these observations,” the author concludes, “it seems unwarranted to state that a child’s first representations are completely mental, that they are inadequate to the degree that his concepts are inadequate, or that he progresses regularly from the schematic to the realistic picture. . . . A child’s first pictures, then, should be regarded not only as the resultant of his unfolding mental concepts but also of his direct experience with a technique.” (P. 43)

Nursery school teachers and others interested in this spontaneous mode of expression on the part of little children will find this pamphlet of great interest.

Progressive education in Europe.—In order to provide some needed material for his own students in a course in contemporary educational trends, as well as to supplement the limited

¹ Barbara Biber. *Children’s Drawings: From Lines to Pictures*. New York: Bureau of Educational Experiments, 1934. Pp. 43. \$4.00.

amount of material in English on present day education in Europe, Dr. Meyer has published his *Modern European Educators*.¹ The fourteen chapters of the book describe for the reader as many different “new schools” or types of education now existing in European countries—Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Russia and England. With few exceptions the work of the educators here presented is that of those about which little has been written in English. Like other experimental schools these in Europe differ widely in their underlying theories, aims and methods, but naturally each has something in common with certain of the others and all represent reaction to tradition in greater or less degree. The author has confined himself to a simple, interesting, non-critical treatment of these several educational experiments. The book is well adapted to the needs of beginning students.

A new series of English texts.—Within the past six months there have appeared on the market three new series of English books which present distinctive and outstanding features when compared with the older type of English text for elementary pupils. “Growth in English”²—written by two careful and practical school people—has the following unusual features:

1. Centers of interest are subdivided into related units embodying definite attainments. The content of the units is rich and varied.
2. The unit plan of organization is used. Definite standards of attainment based on a few prime essentials of English are set up in every unit.
3. There is ample provision for individual differences through the inclusion of group activities and other activities individual in nature.
4. Frequent reviews and self-checks are introduced systematically.
5. Numerous life situations are utilized which demand oral or written English activities such as conversation, discussion, reports, letters, stories, dramatization, poetry and so on.
6. Training in building vivid sense pictures is carefully developed.

The books reflect a carefully thought out philosophy. They show excellent planning. All suggestions offered are practical.

ELEANOR M. JOHNSON
American Education Press
Columbus, Ohio

¹ Adolph E. Meyer. *Modern European Educators and Their Work*. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1934. Pp. xiv+236. \$2.50.

² Mabel E. Simpson and Mary A. Adams. *Growth in English*. New York: Newsom and Company, 1934.

AMONG THE MAGAZINES

Editor, ELLA RUTH BOYCE

A new journal in the field of early childhood issued its first number in June. *Childhood Interests*, sponsored by The Book House For Children, is a digest for parents and teachers. With Edna Dean Baker as one of the consulting editors we are assured of a high quality of effort. Ruth White Colton, editor, says in the August editorial, "Childhood Interests is dedicated to the privilege of helping to break down limitations of both parents and children, to inspire them to dare and to do things, to live richer, fuller lives and to be busy and happy people." Most of its contents are condensed from various publications with references for further reading, but there are some original articles. There are also poems, and a question and answer page on parent's problems. The journal is very attractively illustrated and has one new humorous feature—a page on "Intelligence Tests For Parents." Some of the unanswerable questions children ask are amusingly illustrated. A series on "How Life Begins," of particular use to parents, is published as written by George L. Bird. The first story in the July issue was "The Yucca and The Moth"; in the August issue, the second story is "Old Man Bullfrog's Last Jump."

An old magazine in a new form makes its appearance with a September issue. *The National Parent-Teacher Magazine*, formerly *Child Welfare*, is carrying on the same traditions and is the official organ of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, larger in size and more attractive as to illustrations. An article in this new issue titled, "Send Your Child To Nursery School," by Esther Angell, will be a stimulus to mothers to try to secure for their children this opportunity. She feels that its values are so great that even an untrained teacher is better than none though she warns mothers to be on the alert for the quality of the work done. She believes that even without scientifically trained teachers much can be done with informal neighborhood groups. She gives a number of practical suggestions as to the carrying out of this idea, saying that in this way benefit may come to "many thousands of children, who without such schools in their own neighborhood

would spend their hours alone with bored or over-worked young mothers—or with uninterested busy maids."

One page of this issue, "On Entering School," lists nineteen specific learnings which the home may be expected to provide for the child by the time he enters kindergarten or the first grade. It is adapted from a tentative outline agreed upon by the members of the Committee on the Infant and the Preschool Child of the White House Conference Section on Education and Training. Some of these learnings are:

1. General
 - a. Know own name and address well enough to repeat it to others
2. Physical care
 - a. Attend to toilet needs without supervision
 - b. Wash own face and hands
 - c. Eat food unassisted
 - d. Dress and undress himself with some aid
3. Safety
 - a. Realize the danger of playing in the street
 - b. Realize the danger involved in playing with sharp instruments
4. Motor
 - a. Run, climb, jump easily and with poise
 - b. Manipulate hands easily
5. Intellectual
 - a. Be familiar with the names and uses of common objects
 - b. Talk readily and comprehensively
 - c. Understand and be able to carry out simple directions
6. Emotional
 - a. Have no marked disturbing fears, temper tantrums, or other evidence of serious lack of emotional control
7. Social
 - a. Distinguish between his own possessions and those of others

Parents for September has the timely topic, "Making Children Physically Fit For School," discussed by Dr. Shirley W. Wynne, formerly New York Health Commissioner. The article begins with the statement, "Going to school ought to be a joyous, fascinating and absorbing experi-

ence for every child." It then goes on to show how the discouragement and failure which come to so many children is caused by some physical factor. It praises the Summer Round-Up which the National Congress of Parents and Teachers has been sponsoring for a number of years, defining it as "a campaign to send to the entering grade of school or kindergarten a class of children as free as possible from remedial physical defects." It gives the results of a study made in Idaho a few years ago in which it was found that "the percentage of poorest pupils who had physical defects was very much greater than was that of those having high scholastic training. The proportion of pupils having no defect in the best group was nearly twice as great as in the poorest group." Defective vision is common among school children and its early correction is of very great importance but sometimes difficult to make. For example last year over 27,000 children in the New York schools were found to have poor vision and corrections were secured for 21,000 of them. Dr. Rodin is quoted to the effect that "Poor vision may result in mental retardation, the development of an inferiority complex, and even juvenile delinquency."

Another common defect among school children is defective hearing, the estimate being 15%. This article points out that this defect is often not recognized by either parent, or teacher and not always discovered in routine physical examinations, yet is one seriously affecting the child's ability to learn. The nose and throat offer points for many bad conditions which act as focal infections with their results showing in various types of inflammation.

Undernourishment is another common defect found in school children which retards school progress and is dangerous for the child's welfare. For parents this article is a challenge to learn by careful examinations the actual physical condition of their children and to act to remedy all possible defects. For teachers there is the challenge to recognize special disabilities in their children and to meet them in the school situation as far as possible.

In *School And Society* for September 8th, David Snedden writes on "Education and Social Change." The thesis of this article is, "Should education follow or lead social change?" While feeling that this is perhaps a futile question of the order of "which comes first, the chicken or the egg?" he believes that there are "certain issues implied by the query which deserve close consideration by constructive thinkers who are seeking

to extend the functional efficiencies of school and college educations."

He defines social changes as including "any and all inventions, religious innovations, political reconstructions, novel philosophical theories, popular movements, natural cataclysms and the like, which presently or ultimately affect profoundly the conditions and behaviors of large numbers of human beings." In trying to think this problem out it becomes necessary, the author thinks, to "give separate consideration to the visible primary and the inferred secondary effects of particular changes." In illustration of this point he says, "evolution of scientific agriculture and the like often have profound secondary political and even religious and cultural effects."

Looking at social change historically, he finds "at least three phases, functional conditions or stages" which may be commonly distinguished. "First, there is an innovating discovery, personality, event or other seemingly unique cause. Second, there is a limited social area of persons or conditions which seem nearly 'ripe' as soil for the acceptance, promotion or 'growth' of the social change. Third, there is the world at large, including often vested interest opposed to the change, throughout which the innovations spread slowly or rapidly, according to a variety of conditions which can usually be understood only in close relationship to particular case situations."

This clear analysis of social change leads on to the question of whether "proposed school educations in the past" have had anything to do with "the inciting events" of its first stage. His answer to this question is that "there is no justification to look to armies of educators in the past or under any conceivable conditions in the future for such innovations," answer to which there are many who would take exception. In illustration he says, "How seldom, for example, do university faculties, even in our day, produce great innovating writers, inventors, explorers, quasi-fanatical theorists, Messiahs, or political leaders?" Here again is surely room for debate! Turning next to the third stage, now, he finds, "obviously, schools and teachers in schools have great opportunities and responsibilities." He cites several illustrations.

Turning again to the question with which he started, he says, "Public schools certainly do not lead in the innovation and militant minority or second stages of such changes. How could they? . . . On the other hand, they certainly can and do and even for ages past they have led in furthering, in popularizing these social changes." The article ends with some further discussion of the third

stage of the author's analysis. He points out that even a great mind or great discovery "would produce no significant effects unless surrounding conditions within at least substantial proportions of a population were 'ripe.'" And indeed it is well known that historically this has often been the case. He concludes, "It could well be a commendable ambition on the part of a class of educators of vision to prepare the soil for the coming of the seeds which a discoverer, a daring leader, an opportunity, might bring."

Mental Hygiene in its quarterly issue for July has an article by Dr. H. W. Newell, psychiatrist of the Mental Hygiene Clinic in Baltimore on "The Methods of Child Guidance Adapted to a Public School Program." Since his work was formerly in Cleveland, this article is a report of work done there. It is a paper with many practical suggestions, questions and answers. The following are some of the questions:

1. "What are some of the modifiable environmental factors that hinder the child's adjustment at home or at school?
2. "What are some of the treatment techniques employed by a child-guidance clinic?
3. "How important is the school in the treatment of children who show behavior or personality problems?
4. "To what extent can teachers carry over to the other children methods they have learned from the intensive study of one child?
5. "What are the results obtained by the case-study method and how can they be measured."

As these are the questions which arise in the minds of all who are dealing with children and who are in any way in touch with the child-guidance movement, his answers of them from practical experience become important.

The first question the clinic asks in its case studies is, "What thrill is the child getting out of his behavior and for what craving is he seeking satisfaction?" The author tells us security is the common thing which the child, and indeed every one, seeks. Security is of three kinds: physical, economic and affectional. Case studies show that "Most problem children suffer from too much or too little affection." This is most frequently caused by mal-adjustment between the parents which often results in the children being unwanted. This produces opposite types of attitudes toward the child harmful to him—neglect on the one hand, or on the other, over-attention due to

sense of guilt on the parent's part. This produces behavior in children which is found so commonly in cases of this type that they are grouped together and known as a syndrome. These are:

1. Nervous, restless, fidgety behavior
2. Short attention and poor concentration
3. A more or less constant playing for the attention of the teacher
4. A marked tendency to annoy other children
5. Unpopularity and inability to do things

It is startling to find that of 78 consecutive cases studied at the clinic the seven most frequent reasons for referring children included this syndrome of six symptoms. With these may occur specific behavior conditions by individual conditions, such as lying, stealing, and so on. The child must have satisfaction. The problem of treatment is to lead him to substitute mature satisfactions for immature ones. The methods of treatment are illustrated with several cases, the usual procedure being to carry on intensive work with the home, school and child, and then keep the case under observation, discontinuing active treatment. As to results only a subjective measure seems possible but, in so far as possible, bias was discounted, and it was found that the schools which co-operated well with the clinic had a very much higher standard of successes.

This report of the carry-over value of the work done is significant. After a successful treatment of one case in which the school, while not agreeing with the method of the clinic, had tried it in a difficult case—two more children from that school were likewise treated and all three are adjusting satisfactorily. The article continues, "Here is the sequel to this story: Last fall the principal asked every teacher in the building to pick out the most disturbing child in her classroom and try our methods with the child. Twenty such children were selected and two months' work brought very gratifying results. This story indicates that the value of a clinic to a school system lies less in the benefit to the individual child than in helping teachers to understand and treat all problem children in a more constructive manner." He concludes with a caution lest we think that a universal panacea has been discovered. "Personality traits, attitudes, and habits are the product of a process as slow as growth. Educators and clinicians who try to help children along this road must realize that they cannot change the past. The best we can do is to provide a better opportunity for future development."

RESEARCH ABSTRACTS

Editor, ELIZABETH MOORE MANWELL

What is Known Concerning the Child's Readiness for Reading? Problems bearing upon readiness for reading have been engaging the attention of those interested in educational research. The evidence which they have gathered is conflicting. It is scattered through research literature, and it is not always available to teachers and administrators who wish to bring their procedures into line with the scientific data. Many of the studies are not labeled "reading readiness" and their bearing on the problem can be discovered only by close examination. In many instances research has been carried on for the purpose of solving other problems but the results are pertinent to an inquiry into readiness for reading.

The Reading Readiness Committee of the Association for Childhood Education has reviewed and summarized from time to time published studies related to the problem. There is a wealth of unpublished material however, which has not been included in these summaries. We report a study¹ which was conducted for the purpose of analyzing and summarizing unpublished material in order that the data which it contributes may be more readily available for guidance. Thirty-two Doctor's dissertations and Master's essays were analyzed, twenty-one of which have not been published.

The introduction to the study includes the historical development of the problem of reading readiness. Consideration is given to the following factors of readiness for reading:

- Chronical age
- Mental age
- The psycho-physical element
- The physical status of the child
- Children's experiences

A report of practice and research is given in the first part of each of the chapters devoted to a consideration of a factor of readiness for reading. These reports are followed by a summary of evidence gathered from the studies concerning the relation of the factor to readiness for reading.

¹ Iva A. Mercer, "An Analysis of Research Concerned with Readiness for Reading." Unpublished Master of Arts essay. Yale University, 1933. (Abstract prepared by the author.)

The headings used for the summaries are:

- Investigation
- Date of investigation
- Number of cases
- Problem
- Conclusions

Included with the evidence is the author's interpretation of it. In cases where there were discrepancies between the method of research and the findings submitted by the investigator the author's criticisms are added.

The evidence given which bears upon the predictive value for readiness for reading of intelligence tests and reading readiness tests should prove of especial interest to first grade teachers.

The appendix consists of 157 pages of the briefed studies. They are briefed under the headings:

- Purpose
- Subjects
- Methods
- Tests and Other Measures Used
- Results
- Conclusions

The organization of the study and the wealth of material it uncovers make it a valuable reference book. Its usefulness is limited, however, by the fact that it has not been published. It can be secured only through inter-library loans with Yale University.

Should School Children Be Grouped According to Ability? One would like to devote almost a whole issue of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION to presenting in detail a very careful study by Dr. Sauvain¹ on the opinions of parents, teachers and school administrators regarding ability grouping. Every chapter is interesting and stimulating to the thinking of the reader. A glance at the table of contents will indicate the scope of the study:

1. The problem (with a review of other studies and a description of the purpose, method and subjects of this study).

¹ Walter Howard Sauvain, "A Study of the Opinions of Certain Professional and Non-Professional Groups Regarding Homogeneous or Ability Grouping." New York: Columbia University Teachers College Bureau of Publications Contributions to Education, No. 596, 1934. Pp. 151.

2. Extent of knowledge of parents and children about grouping placements.
3. Ability grouping and the happiness of the child.
4. Scholarship under ability grouping.
5. Parent efforts to get children into other sections.
6. Social attitudes (of children) under ability grouping.
7. Opposition and preferences regarding ability grouping.
8. Strong and weak points of ability grouping according to principals and school officials.
9. Analysis of a few factors influencing responses about ability grouping.
10. Miscellaneous factors.
11. Conclusions (with implications for education).

The data of this investigation were obtained as follows:

The author wrote to the superintendents of 107 cities in order to secure the coöperation of 16 who were willing to have the opinions of their teachers, parents, and school officials investigated regarding grouping. In each of the 16 cities thus represented he carried on the study in 10 elementary schools when the population of the city was over 200,000, and in five schools (whenever this was possible) when the population of the city was less than 200,000.

In each school thus selected Dr. Sauvain obtained data from the teachers in six class rooms, three in the third grade and three in the sixth, and from the parents of the first five children entered in the class book of each of these teachers, as well as from the principal of each of these schools. He thus received material from 1677 parents, 364 teachers, 71 principals, and more than 50 school officials.

Dr. Sauvain carefully points out that his study does not attempt to decide the question as to the wisdom of dividing grades of children into sections according to their mental ability, school achievement or general maturity. Rather he indicates how complex the problem is, and attempts to find out how those adults who are closest to the child, either in school or at home, like the plan and how they think the plan affects the child's happiness, his social attitudes of superiority or inferiority, and his school progress. He also attempts to show under what circumstances and with what ages and classes of children ability grouping works best or worst, and what kinds of parents and teachers are likely to favor or oppose it. Such facts are needed by the intelligent

teacher in any school system to-day, for these are days of sudden changes in our schools with drastic curtailments and reorganizations due to economic and political pressure. Only by the presence of well-informed, evenly-balanced and courageous teachers throughout our country can ill-advised, hysterical changes be prevented.

There are, as a result of this study, seven pages of valid and specific results and conclusions. Space permits us to point here to only a few of these:

Opinions of parents

On the whole, parents may be considered as favorable to the use of grouping in those cities where it is employed. This was particularly true of the parents of children in the higher or brighter sections. There was much more parent opposition to grouping than would be indicated if the principals' estimates of parents' complaints were the sole measure of this opposition.

Many more parents said they knew in which ability sections their children were located than did actually correctly state the sections of their children. Parents knowing and admitting that their children were in slow groups were more opposed to grouping than were parents of other children in slow groups. In the same way parents knowing and stating that their children were in bright groups were far more in favor of grouping than were other parents having children in bright groups.

Over four-fifths of all parents indicated that they believed their children knew in which ability sections they were located.

Opinions of teachers

Teachers seemed to like ability grouping somewhat more than did the parents. The teachers' preferences as to ability sections varied widely, although slow ability groups were least popular, and about one-fifth of the teachers in charge of slow ability groups would never teach there if given a choice in the matter.

Less than 5 per cent of the teachers indicated that they would favor abandoning such grouping.

Opinions of principals and school officials

A decided majority of principals and other school officials was in favor of ability grouping and indicated many more advantages than disadvantages in connection with the use of ability grouping.

Factors related to responses about grouping

Teachers and parents of children in bright sections were more in favor of grouping than teachers and parents of children in other sections.

Where the I.Q. was weighted heavily in doing the sectioning, teachers were not so sure that desirable social attitudes result.

The educational philosophies of the teachers did not seem to bear important relationships to their responses. Parents holding progressive philosophies were more in favor of grouping, but this was probably due to the fact that their children were largely in the bright sections.

While parents did not react favorably to adaptations of the curriculum to meet the needs of ability groups, in the case of teachers, they seemed decidedly more favorable to grouping if they were placed in schools where the curriculum had been adapted for different ability groups.

Parents in high-class communities liked group-

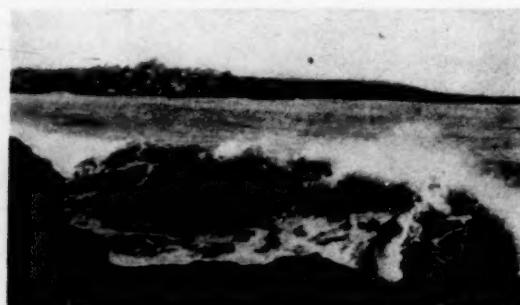
ing better than did those of less favored areas. Teachers in low-class communities seemed surer that desirable social attitudes accompany grouping.

Teachers showed a slightly greater preference for grouping in schools where opportunities were not restricted for slow groups by decreasing enrichment and increasing time spent on minimum essentials.

Teachers of lower grades found grouping more to their liking than did those of upper grades.

"The chief values of the study lie in revealing the extent to which expressed approval or disapproval may be expected and the ways in which various factors . . . are related to the responses concerning homogeneous or ability grouping."

More A. C. E. Convention Plans



SWAMPSCOTT-BY-THE-SEA
MASSACHUSETTS

This is a view of the Atlantic from the New Ocean House which has been chosen as Headquarters for the A.C.E. Convention in Swampscott, June 26-30, 1935. All activities will center around the hotel where you may have your room, enjoy leisurely meals and attend inspiring meetings. A golf course, tennis courts, and fishing and sailing boats are available for those who enjoy sports. Concerts are held daily in the foyer and music is played during dinner in the main dining room. Nothing that will add to the comfort and pleasure of the guests has been overlooked.

So report the representatives from the six New England states who are to be hostesses for the 1935 Convention who met at Swampscott October 6th. In addition to enjoying the comforts of The New Ocean House reports of progress on plans for the Convention and discussions of future activities completely filled a busy day. Already the enthusiasm and interest of this group have permeated New Ocean House and have begun to trickle through to those of us in distant parts

For Swampscott is down by the ocean,
For Swampscott is down by the sea,
Where blow the cold breezes of Neptune,
And shines the bright sun on the sea.

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